

SIX SIMPLE STEPS TO MAKING MAP MAGIC

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2005, VOL. 23 / NO. 5

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# Ancestry

**Trouble Brewing  
in Your Family Tree?**

**Images of the Dead**

**Family History  
Everywhere**



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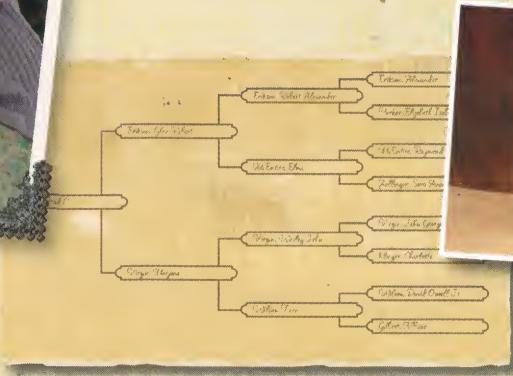
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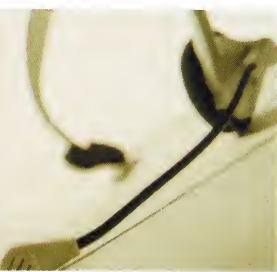
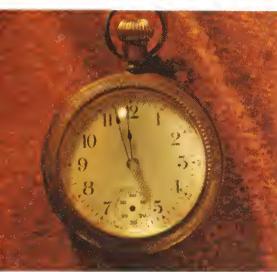
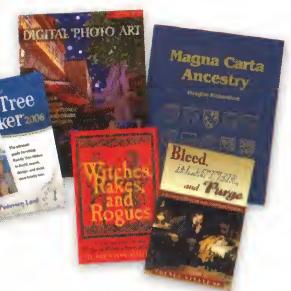


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# M

ark Twain was speaking once about his hometown of Hannibal, Missouri, to a reporter in India. "All that goes to make the *me* in me," Twain said, "is a small Missouri village on the other side of the globe."

I have never met a family historian who didn't feel the same.

Home is a place we never forget. Whether it is a place that brings back memories of a rosier time of life, a place marked by sadness, or a place where family ties were cemented, the places we call home play an amazing role in our identity and how we perceive life.

Henry Thoreau spent only two years living in Walden Pond, but of it he said, "I cannot come nearer to God and Heaven." Walden symbolized everything Thoreau held dear—personally, spiritually, and philosophically.

Even the places where we spent only short periods of life play a role in molding our character. It was that way for our ancestors, too. And today, seeing and touching the places where they once lived provides us a physical and tangible sense of connectedness to those who gave us life.

Providencia, a tiny mining village in a remote area of Mexico accessible only by horseback, was home to my family for twenty summers. We had an icebox with ice delivered on the back of a burro, cooked on a wood stove, and had none of the modern conveniences we depend on so much now.

I suspect that living in Providencia had a lot to do with my appreciation for my ancestors' lifestyles. As I grew up, I never expected to see the places where some of my ancestors lived in Ireland, but when I did, it was thrilling. Odd as it seems, I treasure the stones I picked up from the beautiful Irish countryside—probably unchanged since my ancestors left there almost two hundred years ago. My husband—definitely not a genealogist—enjoys the framed photos of his ancestral country, Hungary, and his boyhood home in Cleveland, just as much.

Long ago, I borrowed a book about the history of the Spaniards' settlement in Providencia in 1562. It intrigued me, and, although it's been years since I returned the book to the old man who lent it to me, I still remember it well because it was in Spanish and I labored to translate it.

Not so long ago, I was looking for an old map I used to have to show my family where I once lived. Having no

luck, I turned to the Internet. A Google search turned up not only a map of Providencia, but also an online version of the history of the area that I lived in and loved for so long. (It's also in Spanish—more translating ahead.)

Reading George G. Morgan's article about maps in this issue got me thinking—as technology expands, more doors open to the places we and our ancestors called home. Even if we are not able to make a personal visit and feel the ghosts of our ancestors right where they lived, we can still take a virtual journey to the homes they left behind.

And just as the places our ancestors lived became a part of their makeup, the places *we* live become a part of us. In ways we can't even see right now, our experiences carry over from one generation to the next.

In the process of remembering and learning about old homes, we can understand ourselves a little better. Right now, we may be the only ones who have a clear memory of the places we and our ancestors called home. Even as memories dim and space and time separate us from our homes and the homes of our ancestors, technology provides us with new ways to rediscover our past and to write about it and preserve it for future generations to enjoy. Though we may not be able to write about our homes quite as engagingly as Thoreau or Twain, shouldn't we give it a try?



*Loretto (Lou) Dennis Szucs*

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## Readers' Voices: Were you shocked or delighted to find a black sheep ancestor?

### Sweet or Rotten?

When people ask "Aren't you afraid of finding someone rotten in your family," I tell them that you have to take the good with the bad.

Case in point—my Gatchell ancestors. The Gatchells lived outside of Boston during the late 1600s. Joseph and Wibera, my seventh great-grandparents, were allegedly part of a burglary plot as were other family members. Joseph was convicted and was either whipped or fined.

Joseph and Wibera's daughter-in-law, Elizabeth Boude Gatchell, accused her brother-in-law of heresy. His tongue was branded as a result. Elizabeth then caused a ruckus in church by attacking another female member of the congregation. But she also had her good side. During the 1692 Salem witch trials, Elizabeth signed a petition attesting to the good character of Mary Bradbury, a 73-year-old woman wrongfully accused of witchcraft (see *They Came from the Family Tree*, page 18, for more information on Mary Bradbury).

The fact is if I didn't accept Elizabeth as my sixth great-grandmother then I wouldn't be able to claim Lady Diana Spencer as my eighth cousin who was descended from Elizabeth's brother, Grimstone Boude. Like I said, you have to take the good with the bad.

Marion Brown Baker

### While Serving His Country

It might shock others, but I was delighted, or at least very intrigued to find a black sheep ancestor. My great-uncle, Charles, died while serving in the U.S. Army during the Mexican War. I'm not sure what the army told my grandmother (Uncle Charles's sister), but later, my father met a man who had served with Uncle Charles.

The man told Dad how Uncle Charles really died. Charles, said the man, was killed by the husband of a woman with whom Charles had been caught in bed. When my grandmother heard this, she said it sounded a lot more like Charles than anything the army had said.

Dan Alexander

### Immortalized Black Sheep

I was thrilled to find our black sheep. When I was in my early teens, my maternal grandfather, Boppa, told me that we had a famous train robber in the family. The man was his mother's cousin and did the dastardly deed in British Columbia. That was back in the early 1950s. For many years I kept the story in my head, filed away under "boring."

Much later, Boppa mentioned it again, and a light flashed—the robber would be a Colquhoun.

One Saturday afternoon in the 1990s, I saw a TV listing for a Canadian movie about an old stagecoach/train robber in British Columbia. I tuned in and was quickly disappointed that the subject was Bill Miner, the Grey Fox. I went to the grocery store, but I left TV on. When I came back, I happened to glance at the movie, and VOILA—I hit the jackpot! One of Miner's accomplices was Louis Colquhoun. It turned out, however, that they were a sorry pack of robbers, netting only a bottle of laudanum, a painkiller.

After making a post on a Colquhoun ancestry message board, some people in Canada sent me messages about Louis Colquhoun. Included were details of his family back in Ontario along with recommendations of websites to review. These finds brought me news articles about his trial, the prison record of his death, a history

of his family, and census records from several years—more information than I have ever found about any other family member.

Sandra Shaw/Schoch Hartwick

### A Hidden Past

I was shocked beyond belief by a huge scandal that spilled out before my eyes several years ago. My charged, fragile emotions riveted me to my post office parking space for upwards of thirty minutes after reading an expansive 1894 newspaper account—in shocking detail and vivid imagery—of my celebrated great-grandfather, a man who contributed richly to his community, his college, and his church before spiraling into a murder that took the life of his medical patient, a young woman with postpartum depression after the loss of her only baby. My great-grandfather also shot this woman's husband.

After the shooting, a sheriff's posse located my great-grandfather and took him home to spend a few lucid hours with his noble wife and their children, including my grandfather who was thirty years old at the time. This black cloud squelched anything resembling a family history discussion over the past 111 years. My dear grandfather raised me but never mentioned the stain of this dark chapter, nor the overwhelming hurt.

Name withheld

### Readers' Voices Question

**What was the best family history-related gift you ever received?**

Please e-mail your response to Readers' Voices at <[editoram@ancestry.com](mailto:editoram@ancestry.com)>.

# What's New at MyFamily.com, Inc.



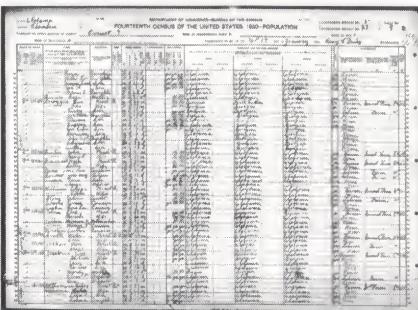
## Family Tree Maker 2006

*Family Tree Maker*® has been the world's best-selling family history software for over fifteen years. There's no easier, more reliable way to build and share your family tree and preserve your family history.

Now, in the latest release, *Family Tree Maker 2006*—the most updated, powerful, and easiest to use version of the program yet, you'll be treated to a bevy of new features including:

- Source Management—you can quickly generate reports that list master sources and the individuals and facts associated with each source.
- Family Facts—you'll have instant access to interesting tidbits of information about your family name.
- Expanded Notes—now you can add up to 1MB of text.

Your copy of *Family Tree Maker 2006* also includes bonus charting companion software. For more information on *Family Tree Maker 2006*, visit <<http://shops.ancestry.com/product.asp?productid=4187&Id2=75083>>.



## 1920 U.S. Census—Revisited

Ancestry.com is tripling its 1920 census index to include *every* available name. Launching by the end of September 2005, you'll no longer be limited to searching 1920 by head of household. Now you can look for Uncle Jim, Aunt Ellen, and cousin

Bobbie—even if they weren't heads of households.

With an every-name index, you'll be able to find ancestors faster than ever before. That means you'll have more time to learn about your ancestors, their parents, grandparents, and other extended family.

Be one of the first to see it by visiting <<http://content.ancestry.com/idxexec/?dbid=6061>>.

## City Directories

Ancestry.com now offers even more city directories, all organized in single statewide databases, making your searches faster and easier than ever before. Approximately 30 million new names were added to the U.S. Records Collection in August 2005, for a total of over 73 million names.

City directories from the following states were updated in this release:

New York  
Maine  
New Hampshire  
Vermont  
Rhode Island  
Massachusetts  
Connecticut  
Utah  
Oregon  
California  
Nevada

And remember, you can also use the NEHGS City Directories (1885–1895), available at Ancestry.com, as a partial substitute for the 1890 U.S. Federal Census (destroyed by fire in 1921). Visit the cities directories database at <<http://www.ancestry.com/search/rectype/default.aspx?rt=37>>.

# Things to Do

September/October 2005

**Recharge** your research skills—Attend the FGS Conference in Salt Lake City and visit the Family History Library while you're there.

**Connect** in the kitchen—Take advantage of the season's harvest and try your hand at some of Grandma's treasured recipes. Or create your own take on a well-loved zucchini bread or fresh, not canned, pumpkin pie.

**Add** a distant branch—Look for a distant relative in the 1920 every name index at Ancestry.com. To be released in September 2005.

**Motivate** yourself—Spend the afternoon listening to success stories from members of your local genealogical society. For a list of societies near you, visit <[www.familyhistory.com/societyhall](http://www.familyhistory.com/societyhall)>.

**Gather** your own history—Collect your own memories from the first day of school, jot them down, and store them in a safe place for future generations. Remember to include stories about teachers, other students, even crushes.

**Relax** on the front porch—Haul the CD player outside and listen to your favorite book al fresco. Think of it as a mini-escape into the past akin to our parents and grandparents gathering around the radio to hear their favorite radio programs.

# On Your Lunch Hour



**S**tuck on a name? Forget what you know about the current spelling—present spelling rules may not have been used by your ancestors (or a census taker).

Spend an hour working through the following tips and see if you make some headway on a tough-to-find ancestor:



Say your ancestor's surname aloud a few times and listen for ways it may have been misspelled.



Write down the first and last name of the person you're seeking. Could a capital "H" be mistaken for "It" or "Il"? Could a lowercase "a" be confused with "o"?



Search for alternate spellings. Even a name as simple as "Smith" has a number of variations like Smithe, Smythe, or Smyth.



Use initials in place of your ancestor's first name when you search.



Review an older or newer census in which you *can* find your ancestor to see how his or her name was transcribed or spelled.



Look for a brother or sister of your ancestor instead. There's a chance they could all be living in the same house or even next door.



## Getting Out...

## Play Ball

Baseball—it's as American as apple pie. But consider the following facts:

- Baseball evolved from a British game, Rounders. Similarly, recipes for apple pie have been tracked back to cookbooks from sixteenth-century England.
- Abner Doubleday has been credited with the invention of baseball, but actually, Alexander Joy Cartwright (1820–92) of New York established the modern baseball field, although his rules were a bit different than those used today.
- Baseball was originally a leisure game of the elite. After the Civil War, the game was introduced to people of all social statuses.
- Ironically, the lyrics for "Take Me Out to the Ballgame," the quintessential seventh-inning stretch song, were written by Jack Norworth, who had never attended a ball game at the time he wrote the song. Even more ironic? The tune was written by Albert Von Tizler who had never attended a game at the time, either.

For almost every one of us whose ancestors called America "home," baseball has been an integral part of our family history. Want to get a better look at how baseball has shaped (and has been shaped by) our views on American culture through the years? Start by taking an autumn trip to one of the following locations:

### National Baseball Hall of Fame Museum

Cooperstown, NY

[<www.baseballhalloffame.org>](http://www.baseballhalloffame.org)

### Legends of the Game Baseball Museum

Ameriquest Field, Arlington, TX

[<http://txrangers.mlb.com/NASApp/mlb/texballpark/museum.jsp>](http://txrangers.mlb.com/NASApp/mlb/texballpark/museum.jsp)

### Peter J. McGovern Little League Baseball Museum

South Williamsport, PA

[<www.littleleague.org/museum/index.asp>](http://www.littleleague.org/museum/index.asp)

### Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum

St. Marys, Ontario

[<www.baseballhalloffame.ca>](http://www.baseballhalloffame.ca)

### Negro Leagues Baseball Museum

Kansas City, MO

[<www.nlbm.com>](http://www.nlbm.com)

### Braves Museum and Hall of Fame

Turner Field, Atlanta, GA

[<www.bravsmuseum.com>](http://www.bravsmuseum.com)

### Original Baseball Hall of Fame Museum of Minneapolis

Minneapolis, MN

[<www.domeplus.com/museum/index.htm>](http://www.domeplus.com/museum/index.htm)

### Babe Ruth Birthplace and Orioles Museum

Baltimore, MD

[<www.baberuthmuseum.com>](http://www.baberuthmuseum.com)

### Yogi Berra Museum & Learning Center

Upper Montclair, NJ

[<www.yogiberramuseum.org>](http://www.yogiberramuseum.org)

### Ty Cobb Museum

Royston, GA

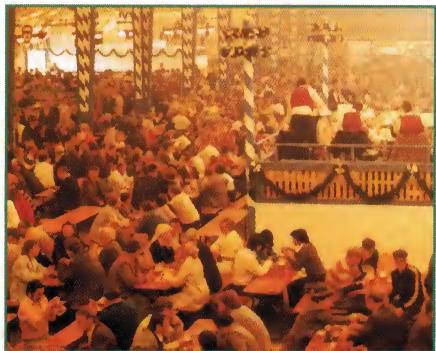
[<www.tycobbmuseum.org>](http://www.tycobbmuseum.org)

### Louisville Slugger Museum

Louisville, KY

[<www.slugger.com/museum>](http://www.slugger.com/museum)

# Celebrate Heritage



## Greek Festivals

Food, dancing, fun—if it's fall, it must be a Greek Festival.

Held throughout the United States, autumn is the most popular time for Greek heritage celebrations. From the East Coast to California, no one—Greek or not—wants to miss out on one of these traditional heritage celebrations featuring music, dancing, and tasty treats like moussaka, spanikopita, and the gloriously gooey baklava.

To find a Greek festival near you, visit [www.greek-fest.com](http://www.greek-fest.com).



Have an upcoming heritage or genealogical event you think might interest the readers of *Ancestry Magazine*?

Send details including name of the event, date, time, location, a brief description, and contact information to [editoram@ancestry.com](mailto:editoram@ancestry.com).

## Sep/Oct Festivals

### Arizona

#### Navajo Nation Fair • 5–11 September 2005

Window Rock, Arizona, celebrates its heritage every year in September by hosting the "World's Largest American Indian Fair," an event that celebrates traditional Navajo values, beliefs, and pastimes. Look for singing, dancing, livestock, arts and crafts, a parade, and one of the largest inter-tribal powwows in North America.

For more information, visit [www.navajonationfair.com](http://www.navajonationfair.com).

### Utah

#### Reminders of the Past, Visions for the Future

#### 2005 Federation of Genealogical Societies Conference

#### 7–10 September 2005

Salt Lake City, Utah, is the home of the 2005 FGS Conference. Featuring four days packed with learning opportunities for every genealogist—novice to professional—all just steps away from the downtown Salt Lake Family History Library.

For more information, visit [www.fgs.org](http://www.fgs.org).

### Kentucky

#### 2005 Roots and Heritage Festival

#### 9–11 September 2005 (street festival)

#### Related events continue through 27 September 2005

For over fifteen years, Lexington's Roots & Heritage Festival has captured the spirit of the area's African American cultural history. The three-day street festival features cultural events, children's programs, entertainment, and educational programs. Other events include films, concerts, football, basketball, and a golf tournament.

For more information, visit [www.rootsandheritagefestival.com](http://www.rootsandheritagefestival.com).

### Quebec

#### Western Festival • 9–18 September 2005

Take a trip back in time to Canada's Wild West. Turn back time with booths and exhibits as well as rodeo events, live music, and country dancing.

For more information, visit [www.festivalwestern.com](http://www.festivalwestern.com).

### Washington, D.C.

#### Black Family Reunion 2005

#### 10–11 September 2005

Celebrate traditional values of the African American family at the annual Black Family Reunion. More than 500,000 people each year revel in live music, themed pavilions, exhibitions, an

arts and crafts market, and a wide variety of food stalls.

Contact the National Council of Negro Women for further information <[www.ncnw.org/blackfamily.htm](http://www.ncnw.org/blackfamily.htm)>.

### New York

#### The San Gennaro Festival

#### 15–25 September 2005

New York plays host to the Italian community's oldest, largest, and liveliest festival at the San Gennaro Festival. Join more than three million visitors at this montage of Italian food, games, rides, a parade, and even a religious procession.

For more information, visit <[www.sangennaro.org](http://www.sangennaro.org)>.

### Pennsylvania

#### Celtic Classic Highland Games and Festival

#### 23–25 September 2005

Combining Scottish, Welsh, Irish, Cornish, and Breton cultures, the Celtic Classic is a richly diverse celebration that provides visitors with food, crafts, Celtic music and demonstrations, and a global competition between international Highland athletes.

For more information, visit <<http://celticfest.org>>.

### California

#### Gold Rush Days: Calveras Grape Stomp and Gold Rush Street Faire

#### 1 October 2005

On one end of town is the Gold Rush Street Faire, on the other end, the grape stomp. Arrive early and take in a walking tour of the historic town.

For more information, visit <[www.visitmurphys.com](http://www.visitmurphys.com)>.

### Indiana

#### Americana 1800 Rendezvous

#### 7–9 October 2005

Spend the weekend living like your ancestors did 150 years ago at the Walker, Indiana, Americana 1800 Rendezvous. Sleep in canvas lodges and tents, cook over open fires, chop wood, spin wool, hammer yarn, and dip candles. Or participate in events like muzzle shootin', the iron skillet/rollin' pin toss, or even a fashion review.

For more information visit <[www.indianafestivals.org](http://www.indianafestivals.org)>.

### Ontario, CA and New York

#### Doors Open Niagara • 15–16 October 2005

Literally step into history during the only bi-national heritage architecture event at Doors Open Niagara. Visitors will have the opportunity to tour historic architecture, learn more about how these buildings were used and constructed, and experience the shared heritage of the area's communities.

For more information visit <[www.doorsopenniagara.com](http://www.doorsopenniagara.com)>.

# Teaching "Ancient" History

In an era when continuing emphasis is placed on getting parents and extended family members involved in the education process, genealogy is a great way to encourage that participation. Talking with family members and finding information around the house helps foster a sense of belonging by inviting students to become active members of their own extended families.

Whether you're a teacher, a parent, or a grandparent, you can add a little family history education into a child's life by tackling the following activities together:

- Sketch what a period house, church, or business may have looked like based on letters, diaries, and original records found in specific geographic areas and time periods.
- Compare your school and education with the education experience of your grandparents by looking through yearbooks and other school records (see *More Than Making the Grade*, page 55, for more information on searching school records).
- Enlarge a three- to five-generation chart on a poster board and illustrate it using employment, military activities, and religious beliefs associated with the family.
- Create a family crest based on events and facts about a family. Items that could be represented include a religious or military symbol, a representation of a particular type of employment, and items unique to a particular culture or heritage.
- Interview a family member about his or her childhood.
- Write an ancestor's biography based on what you've learned through family history sources.
- Calculate exact dates of birth based on the death dates and ages in years, months, and days found on tombstones.
- Tour of a local cemetery where famous/noted town or county figures are buried then determine how many streets, buildings, neighborhoods, and the like are named after these famous individuals.
- Walk through a historic neighborhood looking at the architecture of the houses and the names of the streets.
- Visit a local courthouse to see how records are stored and accessed—and be sure to ask about records of local celebrities.

—Curt B. Witcher, MLS, FUGA

## Getting Organized

Looking for an easy way to keep all of the members of the same family together? Color code them. Whether it's folders, ink, paper, stickers, or labels, choose one color for a family and stick with it (a bonus to Mac users—you can easily color code your digital folders, too, through the **File** menu in **Finder**).

And, to keep the guessing at bay during your next family reunion, take your color codes with you. Create labels on your computer with the appropriate ink colors, or invest in a bevy of dots, stickers, or ribbons and attach one to each attendee to identify which branch of the family tree he or she sits on. Then spend your time reconnecting with family rather than scratching your head wondering exactly whom that woman in the loud red dress is related to.





## Tricks and Treats

If you're one of the millions of Americans with Irish ancestors, you may want to give them a nod of thanks this Halloween as you carve your traditional Irish Jack-O-Lantern.

According to the History Channel <[www.historychannel.com](http://www.historychannel.com)>, the tradition of pumpkin carving stems from a well-known Irish myth about a man named "Stingy Jack."

Apparently, says the legend, Stingy Jack and the Devil were having a drink together one night. Jack, however, didn't want to pay, so he persuaded Satan to turn into a coin that Jack could use to pay for the drinks.

Instead Stingy Jack dined and dashed, dropping the coin into a pocket that also held Satan's bane—a cross—which kept Satan from returning to his original form. Eventually Stingy Jack freed Satan (on the condition that Satan never bother Jack's soul) but tricked him again the next year.

Later, when Jack died, the question arose of whether Jack would go to heaven or hell. But God didn't want him nor did Satan. So Satan sent Jack away one night with just a burning ember for light. Stingy Jack put the ember in a carved-out turnip and has been wandering with it ever since. He became known as Jack of the Lantern or, as we call him today, Jack-O-Lantern.

To frighten Jack, the people of Ireland, says the myth, carved creepy faces into lanterns of potatoes and turnips (the English used beets) and placed these lanterns outside their houses.

Today, Irish-myth purists might be tempted to consider carving a large baking potato on Halloween. But be forewarned—authentic as it may be, the potato is still substantially smaller and has a much higher sugar content than the pumpkin, which means you'll have a better chance of fire with a candle-lit potato than with a pumpkin. Maybe that's why when Irish, Scottish, and English immigrants came to America and discovered pumpkins, they quickly decided that these giant squash would make better lanterns.

# What Drove Your Ancestors?

Just about every shoebox full of ancestral memories has at least a few, if not a dozen, photos of cars. They might be photos of a new car, photos of an interesting car, or even photos that just happen to have a car in the background.

Now, think back to the very first car you bought—was it a snazzy sports car, a jalopy that spent more time in the shop than on the road, or a station wagon poised for family vacations? Whatever it was, that car said something about you, just like your twentieth-century ancestors' first cars said something about them.

How can you find out what a car said about its owner? One of the best ways is by looking at historic advertisements. An ancestor who drove a pre-1920 Pope Model 69 may have just wanted to get from place to place—the car was touted in ads for its dependability—while Paige owners from the same era were driven by owning the “Most beautiful car in the America.”

Similarly, the appeal of a 1959 Studebaker was its “completely new luxury look,” but an ancestor who owned a 1959 Cadillac was probably more attracted to “The world’s most eloquent possession,” fins and all. Also, you may want to search the attic for a stash of speeding tickets if you find a “Top spine tingler”—a 1960s-era Mercury Comet—in an old photo.

You can find historic ads at the Library of Congress website at <<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award98/ncdhtml/eaahome.html>> or at adflip <[www.adflip.com](http://www.adflip.com)>, a subscription site with a selection of free, browseable categories including “automotive.” You might also want to check your local university library for historic magazines, either hardbound or on microfiche.



## Photo Corner

This photo was taken in 1926 during a trip to the Sequoias. Featured are my grandfather Nelson Howard with his father, Nelson Sr., and mother, Natalie Rand Howard (her face is obscured in this photo by a white driving scarf that was blowing in the wind that day), and a friend of my grandfather's from Yale. The car is an Isotta Fraschini, a rare Italian car. Here's Grandpa's story:

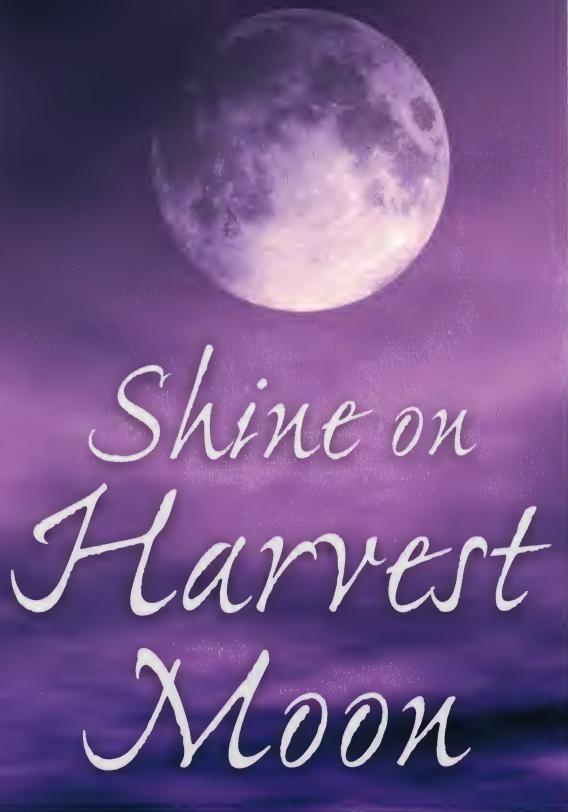
“After finishing our freshman year, my very good friend Eddie Manville and I went to California to spend the summer touring Northern California, including Yosemite and Lake Tahoe, with my mother and father in their very beautiful Isotta Fraschini open car. When we returned home, we stopped at Del Monte for a few days, and Manville and I took the car up to San Francisco, as we had dates with two young ladies for the evening.

On the way up, somewhere near Gilroy, our beautiful Italian car sputtered to a stop. We knew we had ignition trouble, but we couldn't figure out how to get the car started. As we stood by the roadway, along came another beautiful Isotta Fraschini, with chauffeur. Let me state clearly that there were very few of these cars in the United States, let alone in California, at that time. In the most gallant and friendly manner, out stepped Rudolph Valentino, and he and his chauffeur got the car started. Furthermore, he told us where to go in San Francisco for our evening with the two young women. We thanked him most gratefully and thought that was the end of it, but it was not. That night we took our dates dancing at the St. Francis Hotel, and to our glory and amazement, in came Mr. Valentino, who came directly over to our table to renew old friendships. Needless to say, we made a great impression on the girls.”

—Submitted by Gina Sammis



Would you like to see a favorite photo of your ancestors in *Ancestry Magazine*? Now you can submit your photos to Photo Corner. Submissions should include your name, contact information, date of photo, who is pictured, and a short description. Please do not submit a photo of living persons without their written consent. Mail a quality duplicate (no photocopies or originals) to *Ancestry Magazine* 360 West 4800 North, Provo, UT 84604, or e-mail a 300 DPI TIFF scan to <[editoram@ancestry.com](mailto:editoram@ancestry.com)>. Submissions become the property of *Ancestry Magazine*. You will be contacted if your photo is chosen.



**I**t's said that the Harvest Moon seems brighter than the other full moons of the year. That may or may not be true. But the Harvest Moon—annually, the three-day period surrounding the full moon closest to the autumnal equinox, rising on 17 September this year—always held a special significance to our agrarian ancestors.

Each year during the Harvest Moon there is only a brief break between the setting of the sun and the rising of the moon—about twenty to twenty-five minutes in North America, less in Canada and Europe. This abbreviated break, coupled with bright moonlight and plentiful crops, gave our ancestors the additional time they needed to harvest their crops before the first frost set in.

The Harvest Moon, immortalized in song by Nora Bayes and Jack Norworth in 1903 and more recently by Neil Young, is often associated only with the full moon. In actuality, the two moons surrounding the full moon are also considered Harvest Moons. That's good news in 2005. Your own Harvest Moon festivities can start on a 16 September—a Friday—and wrap up on 18 September—a Sunday.

## LUNAR TIMELINE

*~30000 B.C.*

First notations of the days in a lunar month.

*~270 B.C.*

Astronomer Aristarchus estimates that the moon is sixty Earth radii from Earth, a very accurate guess as we now know that the moon is between fifty-five and sixty-three Earth radii from Earth.

*1609*

Thomas Harriot creates the first telescopic mapping of the moon.

*1610*

Galileo is the first person to determine that the dark and light regions of the moon are mountains and craters.

*1840*

J. W. Draper takes the first telescopic photograph of the Moon.

*1878*

George Howard Darwin, son of Charles Darwin, develops the first theory of the origin of the moon—during a time when the Earth spun so rapidly, gravity pulled a portion of the Earth away, thus creating the Moon.

*1882*

Geologist Osmond Fisher appends Darwin's Moon theory, claiming that the Pacific Ocean basin has a scar marking the location of the chunk of Earth that was pulled away to become the Moon.

*1909*

Astronomer Thomas Jefferson Jackson See theorizes that the moon was originally a planet that became ensnared by Earth's gravity. A third theory is also developed and advocated by astronomer Edouard Roche that theorizes both the Earth and Moon were formed independently.

*4 October 1957*

Soviet Union launches first satellite, Sputnik I.

*3 November 1957*

Soviet Union launches Sputnik II. Included in the craft is a dog named Laika.

*1 October 1958*

NASA begins operations.

*2 January 1959*

Soviet spacecraft Luna 1 performs a fly-by and is the first craft to reach the Moon.

*25 May 1961*

U.S. President John F. Kennedy proposes in a speech that America should land a man on the Moon.

*20 July 1969*

Apollo 11 reaches the moon, and Neil Armstrong takes the historic first Moon walk.

*11 December 1972*

Gene Cernan performs the most-recent walk on the Moon as part of the Apollo 17 mission.

Sources: [www.space.edu](http://www.space.edu), [www.nasa.gov](http://www.nasa.gov), [www.pbs.org](http://www.pbs.org)

## Bleed, Blister, and Purge: A History of Medicine on the American Frontier

By Volney Steele, M.D. Mountain Press Publishing, 2005. 365 pages. Softbound. \$15.00. For more information, visit <[www.mountain-press.com](http://www.mountain-press.com)>.

Do you have an ancestor who was a doctor or healer? Are you interested in the medical practices of the Western frontier? Would you like to know more about the conditions in which your frontier American ancestors lived?

*Bleed, Blister, and Purge* explores illnesses, injuries, and medical care in America from the late 1700s to the mid-twentieth century. Written by a retired medical doctor, the book offers its reader facts and anecdotes to highlight the dedication of the physicians and caregivers who tried to improve the lives of those around them.

Dozens of historical photographs and illustrations bring to life the stories of the American West—from the Native American healer performing an arrow extraction, to the mountain man's bear grease remedies, and the day-to-day challenges of the country doctor. And through it all, the reader also gets an alternative perspective of the living conditions on the American frontier. The book also includes an extensive bibliography, a glossary of archaic medical terms, and an index.

## Digital Photo Art

By Theresa Airey. Lark Books, 2005. 207 pages. Softbound. \$29.95. For more information, visit <[www.larkbooks.com](http://www.larkbooks.com)>.

Like almost every other aspect of family history, photography has gone digital. *Digital Photo Art* helps the family historian understand the tools available to turn old and new family photos into original works of art.

Readers learn how to digitally create effects to make photos look like old prints or watercolor paintings. The book also explains techniques traditionally used by artists including hand-coloring photos and adding otherworldly effects.

Information is presented through examples and step-by-step instructions, allowing readers to develop an understanding of the latest computer technology available. This book can also help a family historian replicate a long-forgotten photography style or technique. And it may provide the inspiration and know-how required

to encourage readers to add their own interpretation to ordinary photos and create unique works of art.

## Magna Carta Ancestry

By Douglas Richardson. Genealogical Publishing Company, 2005. 1099 pages. Hardback. \$100.00. For more information, visit <[www.genealogical.com](http://www.genealogical.com)> or <[www.royalancestry.net](http://www.royalancestry.net)>.

In 1215, King John of England signed the Great Charter, or as it is more commonly known, Magna Carta, allowing twenty-five barons to ensure compliance with the document. Now, for genealogists wanting to know how their own families may have affected this hefty chapter of history, comes *Magna Carta Ancestry*.

Weighing in at nearly 1,100 pages, *Magna Carta Ancestry* traces the lines of over two hundred seventeenth-century American colonists back to one of the fifteen Magna Carta barons who had descendants. The book, designed for genealogists and historians, features over 18,000 entries, hundreds of biographical summaries, a nearly one-hundred-page bibliography, a full index, and, in case you're curious, a full English translation of the charter itself.

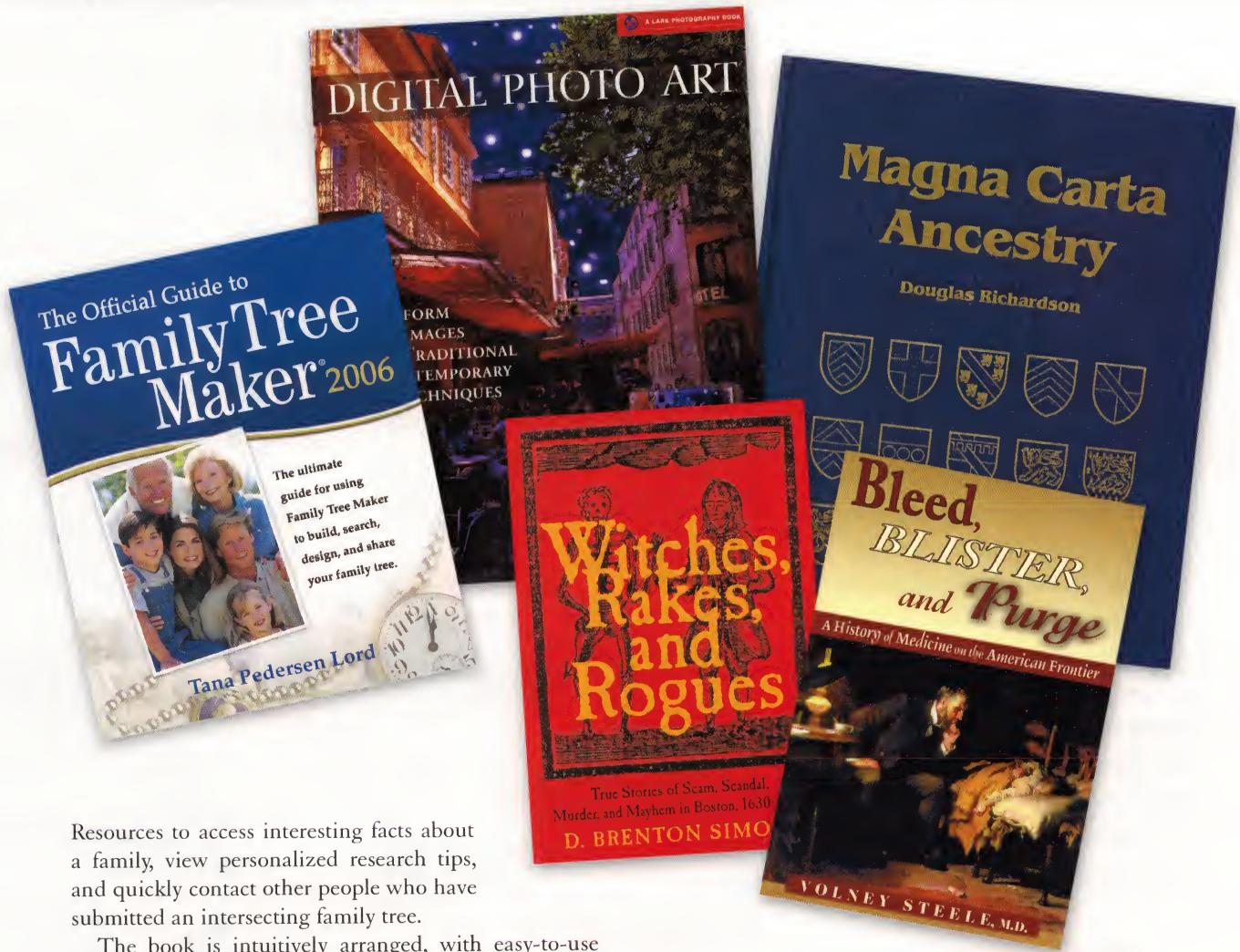
## The Official Guide to Family Tree Maker 2006

By Tana Pedersen Lord. Ancestry Publishing, 2005. 385 pages. Softbound. \$24.95. For more information, visit <<http://shops.ancestry.com>>.

Whenever a new version of a software is released, there are bound to be questions. How is this version different from the old one? How do I get up to speed quickly and simply?

Fortunately, upon the release of *Family Tree Maker 2006*, Ancestry Publishing already had these questions, and a host of others, in mind when they published *The Official Guide to Family Tree Maker 2006*.

Readers will learn how to build family trees, search for individuals in the vast collections at Ancestry.com, design charts and reports, and share their research with others. This version also explains how to use the new and enhanced features on *Family Tree Maker 2006*, including source citing improvements that allow users to connect a single source (including images) to multiple facts. The Guide also explains how to use new Web Search



Resources to access interesting facts about a family, view personalized research tips, and quickly contact other people who have submitted an intersecting family tree.

The book is intuitively arranged, with easy-to-use step-by-step instructions designed to help both the novice and the advanced user. It's the definitive guide to getting the most out of *Family Tree Maker 2006*.

### **Witches, Rakes, and Rogues: True Stories of Scam, Scandal, Murder, and Mayhem in Boston, 1630–1775.**

By D. Brenton Simons. Commonwealth Editions, 2005. 260 pages. Hardcover. \$24.95. For more information, visit <[www.commonwealtheditions.com](http://www.commonwealtheditions.com)>.

Think nothing exciting ever happened in Puritan New England? Then you haven't read genealogist D. Brenton Simons's newest book *Witches, Rakes, and Rogues: True Stories of Scam, Scandal, Murder, and Mayhem in Boston, 1630–1775*.

From scam artists to witches, get the real story behind some of the most notorious people you may have never heard of. Serial murderers and big-time swindlers, extortionists and adulterers, even the infamous witchcraft

trials—this book takes you through their sordid lives, giving you the inside edge on a handful of people who called early Boston home.

Simons's "ghosts" were deeply buried in Boston's records, but as the chief operating officer of the New England Historic Genealogical Society in Boston, he was the perfect man to dig them up. Whether you're from New England or New Mexico, reading these stories—both riveting and entertaining—about early life in Boston might even make you wonder how present society could have ever become so comparatively civil. And, who knows, you might even find that one of these nefarious characters is hanging from your family tree (see *They Came from the Family Tree*, page 18, for a related article by Simons and Michael LeClerc).

For more family history books and products, visit <<http://shops.ancestry.com>>.

**W**hen Brenton was growing up in New England, he learned from his uncle that they were both closely related to some legendary characters from the "Wild West"—the Dalton Gang of Coffeyville, Kansas-raid fame. Several years ago during a family gathering, the subject of the family's near kinship to the Dalton Gang was being discussed when an elderly relative exclaimed "It's nothing to be proud of!"

Michael, on the other hand, discovered an ancestor's name the old fashioned way—while thumbing through the newly published *Maine State Prisoners, 1824–1915*. Wanting to keep up-to-date on resources for research, he casually flipped through the book and unexpectedly discovered the name of his own ancestor.

**SHAMED?**  
**DISGRACED?**  
**REPROACHED?**  
**SCORNED?**

**Not in the least.**

# THEY CAME FROM THE FAMILY TREE...

**Finding Scoundrels,  
Misfits, and Other Colorful  
Ancestors**

**By D. Brenton Simons and  
Michael J. Leclerc**



For some family historians, being descended from upstanding citizens and patriots is key. But others of us prefer a more colorful brand of ancestor or kinsman—the proverbial black sheep. Be it a pirate, witch, counterfeiter, bootlegger, or bank robber, the black sheep is increasingly becoming a sought-after member of many families.

According to Jeffrey Scism, founder of the International Black Sheep Society of Genealogists (IBSSG), "People are fascinated with the details and motivations. A family black sheep is the most personal mystery. It involves real people, relatives and others, and it has meaning to a person's life. A black sheep in the family gives the research more than a flat two-dimensional aspect, it gives the history character (and characters)."

Sometimes black sheep ancestors strike a chord of pride in their descendants. Marie E. Daly fondly recalls the antics of her Irish great-great-grandmother, Peggy (McGlinchy) Kelly, who, with two other women, threatened a priest with a pitchfork, causing him to fall in the Hillsborough River on Prince Edward Island. The priest, Father John MacDonald, was a landlord who had failed to deliver on promises of cleared lands and low rent, and who built houses and provisions for only one year. When the women saw him approaching in a boat to collect their rent, they went out with pitchforks to prevent his landing. Wild waving of pitchforks and oars ensued, and, before long, Father MacDonald ended up in the water, uninjured but considerably embarrassed.

## Revenge of the Rakes and Rogues

Rather than shunning black sheep ancestors, a number of people have begun to celebrate their disreputable kinsmen and even aid others in their searches for similar odd ducks.

While his maternal ancestors were conventional, professional genealogist James W. Warren was surprised to discover that his paternal ancestors were, as he says, "all wayward."

Warren's interest was piqued when he started to realize that the family stories he had heard in childhood were at conflict with information he was uncovering about his paternal line. In time, Warren discovered a completely new family background.

To his surprise, Warren found that his grandfather Michael was a bootlegger from the Ozarks. Michael was also a convicted counterfeiter who had attempted to change a \$1 bill into a \$10 bill, but, as a newspaper reported, it was a "very poor imitation." For a period of about ten years, Michael was a fugitive from the law, living in Arizona under an assumed name. Further research by Warren revealed that the thread of scandal in the family stretched all the way back to the Revolutionary War period when ancestors were lurking "in the mountains, just one step ahead of the law."

A favorite black sheep from the colonial period is Dr. Seth Hudson, a man who intrigues his own Hudson descendants to this day and is treated in the new book, *Witches, Rakes, and Rogues: True Stories of Scam, Scandal,*



## THE TWO FACES OF GENEALOGICAL SOURCES

Not sure you'll find information on a black sheep ancestor in a local history or genealogy journal? A keyword search of the PERiodical Source Index (PERSI) for "killer" returned 23 results; "thief" returned 43 results; "pirate" returned 63 results; "robber" returned 65 results; and "murder" returned 1,242 results.

And, as you're looking for your black sheep ties, consider enlisting help. In 2004, genealogists James W. Warren and Sharon DeBartolo Carmack founded a hereditary society, Descendants of Wayward Ancestors, to help other family historians find their often slippery or disreputable ancestors. The organization's plans include the production of a quarterly newsletter and annual yearbook aptly titled *Ancestors Hanging on Your Family Tree*. Visit <[www.waywardancestors.com](http://www.waywardancestors.com)> for more information.



*Murder, and Mayhem in Boston, 1630–1775* [see Selected Sources from the Deep (for Researching Black Sheep Ancestors) for more information].

Hudson came to Boston in 1761 with a bold counterfeiting scheme. During his scam, Hudson lived extravagantly in the guise of a wealthy traveler. He obscured his unsavory reputation and insinuated himself into Boston society, where, as a world-class con man, he successfully targeted some of the town's most prominent merchants as his victims in a treasury note rip-off. But before he could take flight with his ill-gotten gains, Hudson's fraud was discovered. He was tried and convicted. So notorious was he that his trial attracted unprecedented interest, and his subsequent punishment at Boston's pillory and whipping post caused a major commotion immortalized in a humorous engraving by Nathaniel Hurd.

Hudson, however, did not take to incarceration and, in an escape attempt, nearly burned down the jail. Later, after serving only four months of a one-year prison term, he was released and shipped out on the HMS *Launceston* bound for England, to the great relief of the townspeople of Boston. He later returned to New York and died of smallpox in miserable circumstances.

RATHER THAN SHUNNING BLACK SHEEP ANCESTORS, A NUMBER OF PEOPLE HAVE BEGUN TO CELEBRATE THEIR DISREPUTABLE KINSMEN.





## QUEST FOR THE BLACK SHEEP

Keyword searches of newspapers can be a very useful tool for discovering black sheep stories about your ancestors. To get started, go to the Ancestry.com homepage and select the **Newspapers & Periodicals** link. There you will find a space for a keyword search or a name search. Plug in a term like "thief," and you could get hundreds of thousands of results (more than 155,000 in this case) in dozens of newspapers. Other frequently used sources include court records, diaries, local histories, and obituaries.

Sometimes more unusual sources can be helpful in black sheep research. In early Massachusetts, for example, such stories often appeared in broadsides—inexpensively produced scandal sheets that appealed to a mass market. A great reference work for broadsides is *Broadsides, Ballads &c. Printed in Massachusetts, 1639–1800* (*Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, volume 75). Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1922.

In 2001, a hereditary society was formed specifically to commemorate the contributions of pirates and privateers to American history. As Timothy Lester Jacobs, the founder of the Order of Descendants of Pirates & Privateers <[www.piratesprivateers.org](http://www.piratesprivateers.org)>, says, "One can be descended from saints and sinners, but I think the sinners are more fun."

Jacobs himself believes he may have an ancestor, Richard Singleton, who was a pirate, although he's not certain. "Richard Singleton was a ferryman in New London in the 1600s. He left some clues that he might have been a pirate, including a stint in the Carolinas, then a hotbed for pirate activity," notes Jacobs.

Says Jacobs, searching through chancery and admiralty records may be the best place to find a family pirate, although pirate ancestors are notoriously difficult to identify—one of the reasons Jacobs may be having problems finding more information about Singleton. According to Jacobs, the issues arise from the tendency of pirates to use aliases. "Often we can only identify pirate captains," he says.

Privateers—men who were sanctioned by their government to privately attack or capture other vessels—are, by contrast, much more commonplace ancestors. So far, says Jacobs, all members of the Order of Descendants of Pirates & Privateers have joined as privateer descendants.

But Jacobs is not just interested in the maritime black sheep in his family. He also celebrates the memory of another wayward ancestor, John Billington, a *Mayflower* passenger who was hanged in 1630 for the murder of another man. "I have five *Mayflower* lines," he says, "but I joined the Mayflower Society first on my Billington line."

Christopher Child has an interesting black sheep ancestor in William Healey of Cambridge (ca. 1613–83). Married five times, Healey was involved in several court proceedings over his temperament with his fourth spouse (although new evidence suggests the allegations against him may have been fabricated). Later he became keeper of the Cambridge jail. But in 1682, at around seventy years of age, William Healey was discovered with a pregnant inmate at the jail in compromising circumstances. He was dismissed from his post and spent the winter in the very same cell he was originally employed to guard.

### Descended from a Witch

Catherine Moore is an eighth great-granddaughter of Mary Perkins Bradbury—a witch, according to the Salem witch trials.

Mary's husband was Captain Thomas Bradbury, a prominent member of the Salem community and one of

the original proprietors of the town of Salisbury. Mary's daughter Jane was married to Henry True, who served as a representative to the General Court.

Mary's principal accusers on her charge of witchcraft were the members of the Carr family. George Carr claimed Mary turned herself into a blue boar and attacked his horse as he rode by her house. William Carr claimed Mary caused his brother John to sicken and die. (In actuality, John Carr had been courting Henry True's younger sister, and Henry and Jane objected to this courtship, so when John subsequently died, his family decided Jane's mother Mary was the cause of all their troubles. The witch trials presented a great opportunity to get even.)

As part of her defense, Mary's attorney presented a petition signed by 110 members of the Salem-Salisbury community attesting to her good character. Mary maintained her innocence throughout the ordeal. She was convicted and jailed in spite of her protestations, but her family reportedly bribed the jailer to look the other way one night while they spirited Mary away.

Says Moore of her sordid family tree, "I love the cachet of having such a notorious but well-liked person decorating my family tree, but mostly I love the corollary benefit of the transcripts and records of the trial. There is a wealth of information about Mary and her life, her family, and her neighbors, depositions and testimony in her own words, family relationships and interactions revealed. The trial provides a crystal clear window into the life of my family more than three hundred years ago."

### **Invasion of the Researchers**

Jeffrey Scism of IBSSG reminds us to keep in mind that black sheep are people, too. The incident(s) which make them black sheep are almost always singular events in their lives—lives that must be reviewed in totality.

"The first step is to get the people you interview to see that whatever made the black sheep . . . unacknowledged or rejected in family matters, is 'just history' and [the events or incidents] should be recorded factually," says Scism. "It may be the only way to set the record straight, and it should be factually supported as a non-judgmental report of events. Joe Friday said it best—'Just the Facts,' with a clearly annotated coverage of the 'rumor,' if you choose, so those who follow know that you are aware of what was rumor, and what was true," Scism continues.

As witch-descendant Moore points out, one of the benefits of researching nefarious family members is the possibility that more information may be available regarding them. Many of these scalawags faced criminal or civil trials for their deeds. The resulting court records can shed light on their origins and their family members or, at the very least, provide insight into their character.

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**THE SOCIETY  
OUR ANCESTORS  
LIVED IN  
WAS OFTEN  
VERY GOSSIPY,  
AND AS SUCH  
MANY OTHER  
RECORDS EXIST  
TO HELP IN  
FINDING A  
BLACK SHEEP  
ANCESTOR'S  
STORY.**

# SELECTED SOURCES FROM THE DEEP

## (for Researching Black Sheep Ancestors)

### ORGANIZATIONS

#### Descendants of Wayward Ancestors

<[www.WaywardAncestors.com](http://www.WaywardAncestors.com)>

"Every family has ancestors or cousins who were criminals, misfits, mysteries, or just plain odd," states this new hereditary organization. Formed to aid its members in researching, documenting, and enjoying black sheep of every variety, Descendants of Wayward Ancestors is currently accepting charter membership applications.

#### International Black Sheep Society of Genealogists

<<http://blacksheep.rootsweb.com>>

An active chat list is maintained by this Society for the purpose of discussing black sheep ancestors and relatives.

#### Order of Descendants of Pirates and Privateers

<[www.piratesprivateers.org](http://www.piratesprivateers.org)>

### WEBSITES

#### My Favorite Ancestor or Black Sheep

<[www.NewEnglandAncestors.org](http://www.NewEnglandAncestors.org)>

Stories of rascals and do-gooders alike, this ongoing series of stories is contributed by members of the New England Historic Genealogical Society to its magazine, website, and free weekly e-mail newsletter.

#### Notorious Ancestors

<[www.gensearcher.com/notorious.html](http://www.gensearcher.com/notorious.html)>

"Do you have a colorful character in your family tree?" asks this website. Visitors are invited to post stories about renegades, rebels, and rogues uncovered in their family history.

#### Black Sheep Ancestors

<[www.blacksheepancestors.com](http://www.blacksheepancestors.com)>

Discover links to hundreds of paid and free sources on the Internet for finding scandalous ancestors. In addition to the United States, there are links to sources from Canada and the United Kingdom, and information on international pirates and buccaneers.

### BOOKS

#### *Legal Executions in New England, 1623–1960 and Legal Executions in New York, 1639–1963*

By Daniel Allen Hearn

These volumes offer sketches of hundreds of individuals tried and executed in New England and New York from the colonial period to the 1960s for crimes ranging from murder and larceny to adultery and witchcraft.

#### *The Pirates of the New England Coast 1630–1730*

By George Francis Dow and John Henry Edmonds

Originally published in 1923 as a publication of the Marine Research Society in Salem, Massachusetts, this work details the lives of dozens of pirates with New England connections. Based in large part on original documents, this book contains many maps and engravings as well as information on pirates from Dixey Bull to Samuel Bellamy.

#### *Researching Your Famous and Infamous Ancestors*

By Rhonda McClure

A valuable resource for discovering new sources for researching your black sheep ancestors and tips for how to record them in your family history.

#### *Runaways, Deserters, and Notorious Villains: From Rhode Island Newspapers, vols. 1 and 2*

By Maureen Alice Taylor and John Wood Sweet

Says Amazon.com, this book contains "a wealth of fascinating detail on the lives, clothing, ages, marital status, and 'moral' conditions of many Rhode Island citizens and strangers who otherwise are unknown." For the family historian, this book may prove an invaluable find—the majority of the people featured in this book never appeared in census records or vital records.

#### *Witches, Rakes, and Rogues: True Stories of Scam, Scandal, Murder, and Mayhem in Boston, 1630–1775*

By D. Brenton Simons

When most people think of Boston between its founding in 1630 and the height of the American Revolution, they probably imagine a procession of Puritan ministers in black followed by patriots like Paul Revere on horseback. This book may change a few minds and shock a few others. Said John Demos, Samuel Knight Professor of History at Yale University of *Witches, Rakes, and Rogues*, "Great stories, astonishing characters, dastardly (often quite amusing) deeds: thus the main elements of Brenton Simons's wonderful assemblage from and about the early history of Boston ... the research is as deep as the stories are fascinating; in sum, a remarkable achievement!"

Not all scurrilous individuals were tried in court. But the society our ancestors lived in was often very gossipy, and as such many other records exist to help in finding a black sheep ancestor's story. People kept diaries that may contain goldmines of information. Remember, though, that the people writing these diaries were writing from their perspectives—the source was rarely impartial.

Newspapers have always included tales of embezzlers, cheats, thieves, and other scandals, as have magazines. Often, however, these sources had a tendency to dramatize events, so be sure to try to document from other sources (such as transcriptions of court proceedings) every fact stated in a newspaper article.

Historical journals as well as genealogical journals and magazines can also provide valuable information on black sheep ancestors. In *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Volume 108, 1996*, for example, is an article entitled "New Light on the Bathsheba Spooner Execution" by Deborah Navas. In the article, Navas provides a brief outline of the events surrounding Bathsheba's involvement in the murder of her husband, Joshua. (Bathsheba was subsequently hanged for her crime. Revelation of the fact that she was five months pregnant at the time of her execution subsequently led to a ban on execution of women in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.) If Bathsheba were perched in your family tree, this would be required reading.

And, lastly, you might get lucky and get the story directly from the source—some black sheep left autobiographical accounts of their lives and criminal careers. A great example is *The Autobiography of a Criminal*, by Henry Tufts, a scoundrel from New Hampshire who perpetrated innumerable crimes in the colonies in the late 1700s. His autobiography was reprinted as recently as 1993.

### Tales from the Family Historian

Researching the antics of a black sheep ancestor can provide a welcome respite from comparatively drab lists of dates and places of vital events. A black sheep ancestor can add a new dimension to your family history and shed new light on your family. Keeping events in perspective and including them as part of the entirety of an ancestor's life, however, will give you and everyone a more accurate picture of these colorful characters. ↗

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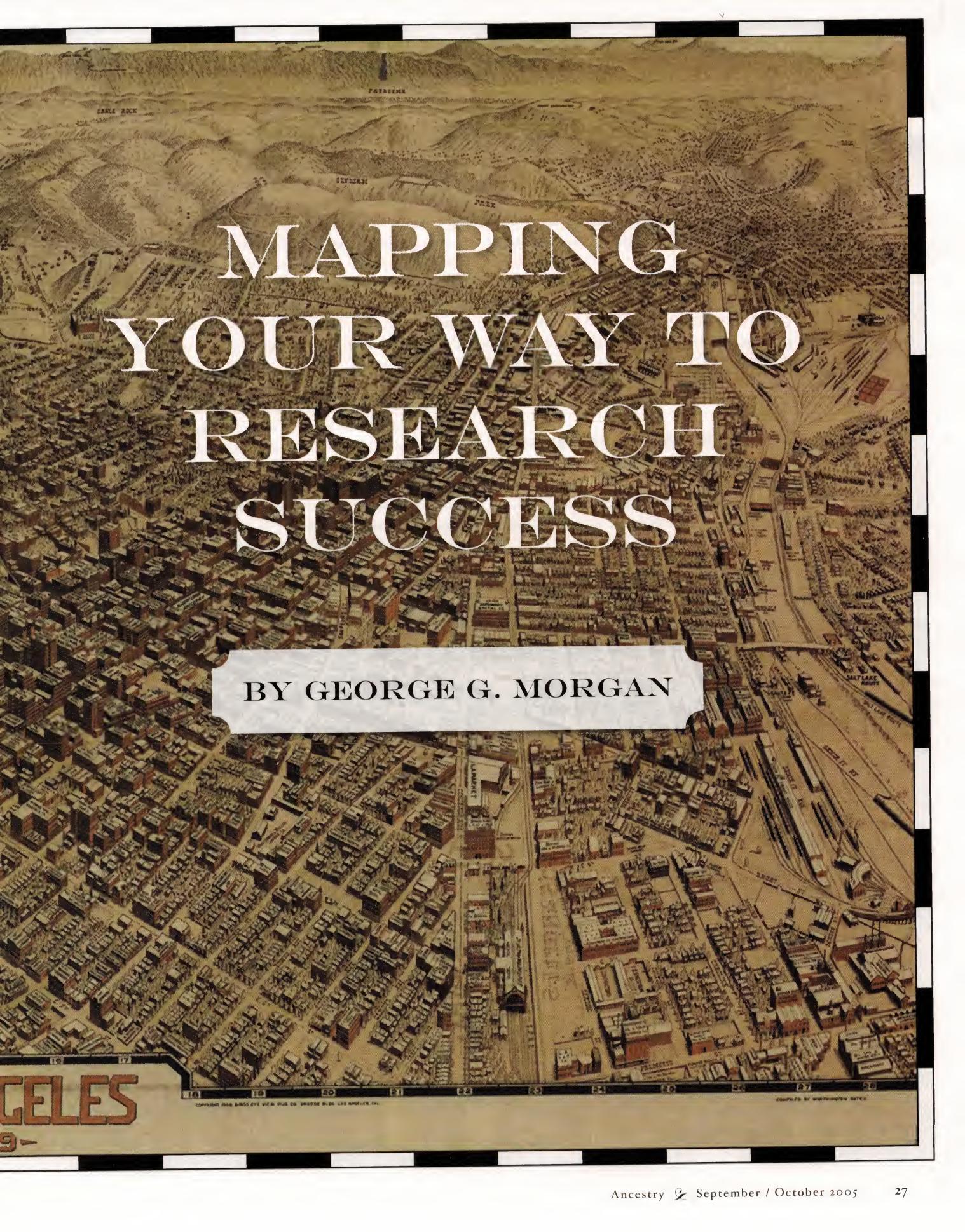
*Michael J. Leclerc is Director of Special Projects at the New England Historic Genealogical Society and is Vice President of Administration of the Federation of Genealogical Societies.*

KEEP IN  
MIND THAT  
BLACK  
SHEEP  
ARE PEOPLE,  
TOO.



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# MAPPING YOUR WAY TO RESEARCH SUCCESS

BY GEORGE G. MORGAN

9-  
GELES

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**T**opographical maps, aerial maps, atlases, county road maps, plat maps, ordnance survey maps, census enumeration district maps, Sanborn fire insurance maps—there are hundreds of different kinds of maps, each with its own purpose.

So, as genealogists, when we face the challenge of locating where records of our ancestors and families were created and determining where those records are located today, maps can be quite a boon.

There are few things more frustrating than contacting or visiting a courthouse or other repository and finding that there are no records for the people we expected to find there. Some of us give up, thinking we have hit an impassable brick wall and concluding that maybe our ancestors never lived there at all. But the fact is we may just be looking in the wrong place.

## RIGHT PLACE, WRONG TIME

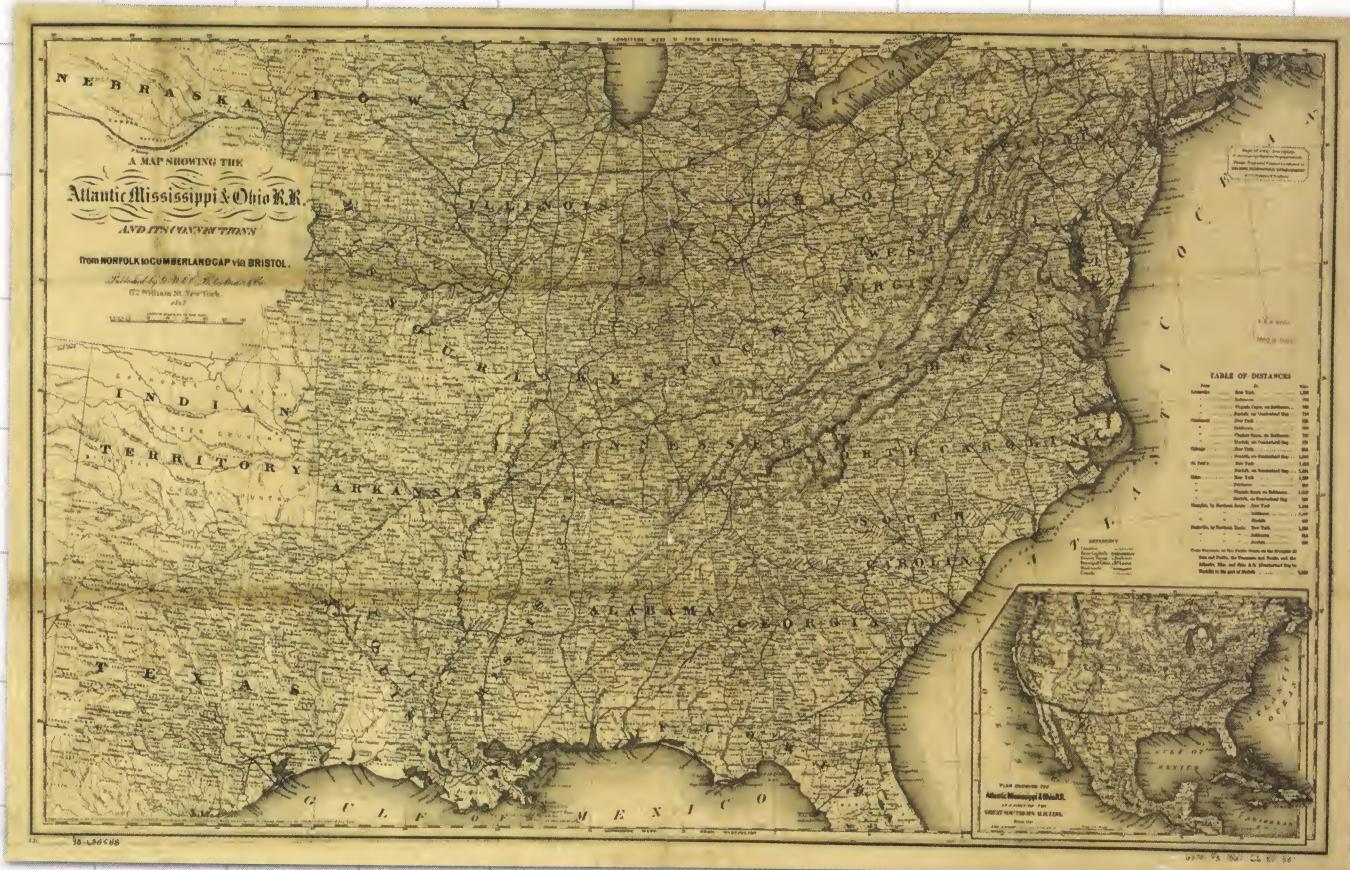
Boundaries and governments have changed over the centuries. Poland, for example, moved its capital between 1596 and 1609 from Krakow to Warsaw, was seized and divided any number of times by Russia, Prussia, and Austria, and ceased to exist on the map for 123 years.

Similarly, land in the United States has changed boundaries. The acquisition of western lands following the American Revolution resulted in the formation of territories that evolved over time into counties, states, parishes, and other divisions. In the years since, some of those towns have appeared and disappeared, while in other instances, names have changed completely.

Because of changes like these, locating places and tracing documents and other evidence can become quite an elusive task for the genealogist. It is therefore incumbent that as you conduct your genealogy research, you also perform scholarly research by studying histories, social conditions, religious attitudes, geographies, gazetteers, and, most importantly, maps.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MAPS

Maps are visual keys to understanding the past at a particular point in time. But it's not enough to just look at a historical map and make assumptions. You should also employ a step-by-step methodology, like the one that follows, to guide you in locating a place and identifying the geopolitical entity in power at the time your ancestors lived there, and to help you find the likely repositories in which



surviving records may be located. Ultimately this process may also make you a more effective researcher.

## STEP 1

### Study the History of the Area at the Time

Start by choosing one ancestor and reviewing everything that you know about him or her. I often put together a time line that lists, year by year, where my ancestor was located and what events took place in his or her life.

Your historical research will add to your existing knowledge about an ancestor by helping you understand more about the political, religious, and social aspects of the area(s) in which your ancestor lived. This will help you determine what records were created at the time, who created them, why they were created, and where they were typically stored. Remember to note boundary changes from the time your ancestors lived in the area to the present and try to identify any place-name changes, as well as places that disappeared entirely.

## STEP 2

### Enlist a Contemporary Map

Locate a specific place by taking a broad look at a detailed contemporary map or atlas, one that shows current boundary lines for countries, states, counties, provinces, parishes, and other divisions. Don't overlook contemporary towns and cities and the lands that they may have annexed over the years because these, too, can alter the future research approach you follow.

Next, locate the specific place or places where your ancestor lived. This is a critical step. If you haven't been able to pinpoint a person's home, you can check for references to specific locations in ships' passenger lists, naturalization papers, family Bibles, census records, obituaries, published cemetery and monumental inscription books and transcriptions, and older histories that cover an area in question.

Note the current state, county, parish, province, or other geopolitical division. Identify surrounding towns, natural features, and structures and their proximity to the place your ancestors lived.

## STEP 3

### When You Can't Find the Place

Think finding a place can't possibly be difficult? These examples prove otherwise:

## QUESTIONING PLACE

Once you've chosen an ancestor to research, try to answer the following questions to get a better idea of the places he or she may have lived and to ultimately help you track down records.

- When and where was the person born?
- When and where was he or she christened or baptized?
- What do I know about the parents, including their place of residence, occupation(s), marriage, and death information?
- Did my target research person attend school and, if so, when and where?
- Were there other siblings and, if so, when and where were they born?
- When and where did my target person marry?
- Whom did he or she marry and where was that spouse living at the time?
- What children did the couple have and when and where were the children born?
- What life experiences influenced the target person and where he or she may have migrated?
- When and where did the person die and where was the body interred?

In 1967, three towns in North Carolina—Leaksville, Spray, and Draper—were combined and renamed Eden.

Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Montenegro were, following World War I and in 1929, formed into Yugoslavia. In the 1990s, individual areas such as Slovenia and Croatia (1991), Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and Montenegro (1992) declared their independence. These are just two examples of name or boundary changes that can affect your research. In other cases, places may have disappeared due to destruction by a war or natural disaster or may have been abandoned and become so-called "ghost towns."

When you can't locate a place, a gazetteer (also sometimes referred to as a place-name dictionary) is a great place to turn. While you can use a contemporary gazetteer, realize that changes may have occurred long ago. For older United States place names, I refer to *American Place Names of Long Ago*, by Gilbert S. Bahn. Historical postal directories, either

printed or microfilmed, can also be used to identify unincorporated locations to which mail, rail shipments, and other materials were delivered (check at local libraries or LDS Family History Centers for availability). Atlases and gazetteers for foreign countries are also good references.

Public libraries, state libraries, local genealogical societies, and/or local historical societies in the area where your ancestor lived may be able to assist you in determining what happened to the place you're trying to find. Academic libraries may have extensive map collections, histories, and gazetteers. They may also have special collections that contain rare or unique maps and other publications.

Finally, search the Library of Congress Geography and Map Collection for assistance in locating "lost" places. The collection features the American Map Collections, 1500–2004 <<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gmdhtml/gmdhome.html>> and the Geography and Map Reading Room page at <[www.loc.gov/rr/geogmap/gmpage.html](http://www.loc.gov/rr/geogmap/gmpage.html)>. If you need assistance, look for the **Ask a Librarian** link and send an e-mail requesting assistance or call the library's reference desk directly.

## STEP 4

## Trace Boundary and Government Changes over Time

In your research, it is important to identify the exact times when boundary changes were made and changes in governments occurred. These will have dictated when certain civil

## EARTH, GOOGLE-STYLE

Want to see more than a map of an ancestral home place? You have two basic choices—book a flight or travel courtesy of Google.

Google Earth <[www.earth.google.com](http://www.earth.google.com)> is the search engine's foray into virtual travel. Billed as a "3D interface to the planet," Google Earth takes the user directly where desired—instantly.

Using the service is simple: just type in an address and watch as Google flies you across the country to your destination. Zoom in or zoom out. See homes and buildings. Pick out Grandma's house or the playground you used to visit. You won't get a map (although you can ask for directions), but you will get a recent satellite image and a unique perspective on the ancestral home front.

records were first created, why they were produced, and what they were used for. Historical research can help you determine where the records were submitted and stored. Further research may tell you if the records remain in the same government facility today, or if they have been transferred to a library, archive, or university library for conservation and storage.

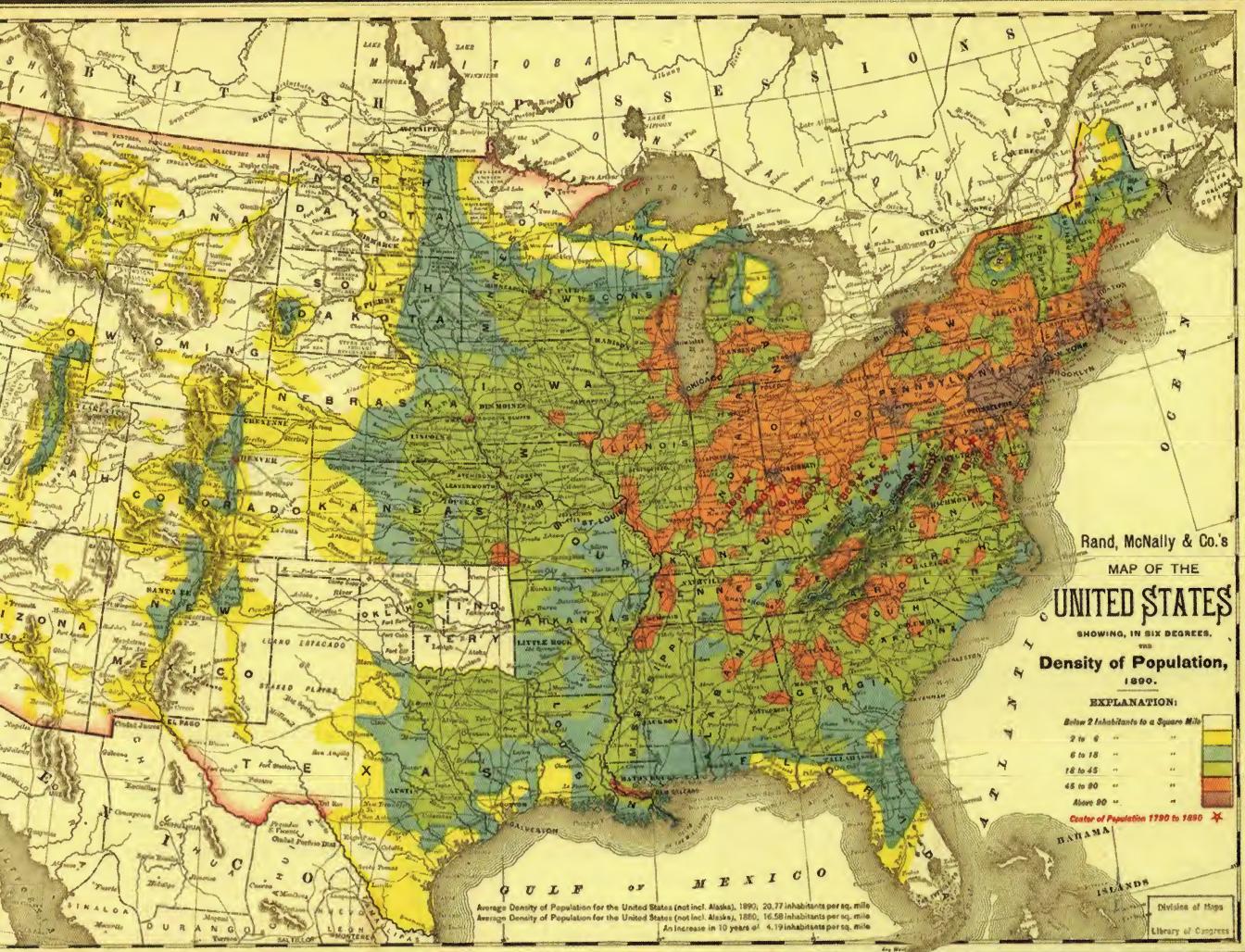
Studying individual areas may tell you precisely when legislation was passed that caused certain records to be created. One example might be the implementation of the Civil Registration System in England in 1837. Registrations of births, marriages, and deaths became mandatory and the records were sent to the General Records Office (GRO). These records are chronologically indexed by year and quarter and accessible to the public at the Family Records Centre in London. You may also order copies of the civil records for your research and files.

In researching states and counties (or parishes) in the United States and the boundary changes from the time of the government's first census, I use William Thorndale and William Dollarhide's book, *Map Guide to the U.S. Federal Censuses, 1790-1920*. Each state or territory is covered, census by census. Maps included in the book show both the old county boundary and the contemporary boundary.

Another indispensable source is *Red Book: American State, County, and Town Sources* published by Ancestry. Included are maps of each state showing contemporary county boundaries, plus state histories and information on the major record types available.

For example, you would find that the town of Wilmington, Delaware, had a registrar of vital statistics after 1881 and that fairly complete records are located at the Delaware Public Archives. You'll also learn that elsewhere in Delaware, records of these events didn't occur until after the creation of the state's vital statistics office in 1913. In other states, you may find that the state legislature passed laws requiring the recording of births, marriages, and deaths in a certain year but that full compliance by the counties did not occur until some years later.





## GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR RED BOOK

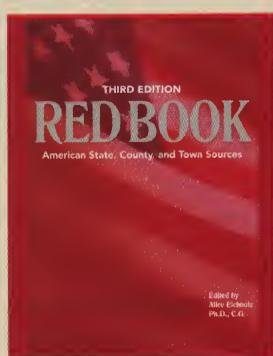
While *Red Book: American State, County, and Town Sources*, published by Ancestry, can help you discern modern-day boundaries, its greatest value may be its state-by-state explanation of records, where and how to find them, and what to expect.

Specifically, the tables in *Red Book* provide the following information for each county or parish:

- the name of the county
- a reference to the location of the county or parish on the included map

- the address of the courthouse or recorder of deeds' office
- the date of formation and the parent county, state, and/or territory
- the year in which certain types of records began to be maintained

To learn more about working with a wide variety of record types, including documents, printed sources, cemetery records, and ethnic resources, you may also want to consult *The Source: A Guidebook of American Genealogy*, also published by Ancestry.





## STEP 5

### Study Historical Maps of the Period

At this point, historical maps of the time period when your ancestors or family lived in the area become essential. Find a historical map and compare it with a contemporary map or atlas. You can trace the contemporary map, overlay it onto the historical map, and, while the scales may vary, you will get a very good idea of the geopolitical location where your forebears were when they lived there.

Take into consideration boundary changes, place-name changes, and natural landmark feature changes. Identify the

state, county, parish, province, or other geopolitical division in which your ancestor lived at the time and determine the current seat of government in that division at that time.

Identify the likely repository for the records you seek. These may include government offices, courthouses, off-site government storage locations, health departments, bureaus of statistics, registry offices, religious institutions, cemeteries, funeral homes, libraries, and archives. Make contact with the appropriate organization to inquire about specific records, whether they exist, where they are stored, and in what format they have been preserved (paper, microform, digital images), and accessibility by the public.

## STEP 6

### What If the Records Are No Longer There?

It is possible that records that originally were deposited at a particular location are no longer located there. The facility may have run out of room and moved the records to an off-site location. The records may have been placed in a library or archive for preservation and public access. They may have been sent to a state library or archive or to the state's bureau of vital statistics. It also is possible that, to conserve space, the original records were microfilmed and subsequently destroyed.

Inquire about the disposition of the records and specifically ask where they are and in what format they're in. It's not uncommon to ask a clerk if the facility has the records and to receive the reply, "No." It is only when you inquire further ("Well, can you tell me where they are or what happened to them?") that you'll receive a response that guides you to the materials you need.

## MAP FOR SUCCESS

Genealogical research involves learning about many different disciplines including history, sociology, and religion.

Geography, however, is also an integral key to success in locating ancestors and finding the documentary evidence they left behind. But don't just make assumptions—they can often lead you to the wrong place. Employing this six-step methodology will help ensure you have greater success in locating the proof you want and need. You'll be glad you did.

*George G. Morgan is the author of the Ancestry Daily News column "Along Those Lines . . .", three books, and hundreds of magazine and journal articles published all across the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. He is currently the president of the International Society of Family History*

Writers and Editors (ISFHWE), a director of the Genealogical Speakers Guild (GSG), a director of the Florida Genealogy Society (Tampa), a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists (APG), the Society of Genealogists (U.K.), and belongs to more than a dozen genealogical societies. He lives in Odessa, Florida.

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## USEFUL MAP SITES ON THE INTERNET

The following sites merely scratch the surface of maps available online, but each one offers a broad view of substantial areas of the world or specific countries. You can also use a Web search engine to locate maps of specific areas by using search phrases like "historical map," and "North Carolina."

Ancestry.com Map Collection <[www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)>

Culture 4.0® Culture—The Contextual Guide and Internet Index to Western Civilization  
<[www.culturalresources.com/Maps.html](http://www.culturalresources.com/Maps.html)>

David Rumsey Historical Map Collection <[www.davidrumsey.com](http://www.davidrumsey.com)>

Library of Congress Cartographic Division Collection <[www.loc.gov/rr/geogmap/gmpage.html](http://www.loc.gov/rr/geogmap/gmpage.html)>

Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library at the University of Georgia  
<[www.libs.uga.edu/darchive/hargrett/maps/maps.html](http://www.libs.uga.edu/darchive/hargrett/maps/maps.html)>

Historic Cities & Documents <<http://historic-cities.huji.ac.il>>

Historical Maps Online from the University of Illinois and University of Illinois Press  
<<http://images.library.uiuc.edu/projects/maps>>

Library of Congress Cartographic Division Collection <[www.loc.gov/rr/geogmap/gmpage.html](http://www.loc.gov/rr/geogmap/gmpage.html)>

National Archives of Canada <[www.collectionscanada.ca/05/0514\\_e.html](http://www.collectionscanada.ca/05/0514_e.html)>

Newberry Library Cartography Collections <[www.newberry.org/collections/mapoverview.html](http://www.newberry.org/collections/mapoverview.html)>

Old Maps (Ordnance Survey Maps of the United Kingdom) <[www.old-maps.co.uk](http://www.old-maps.co.uk)>

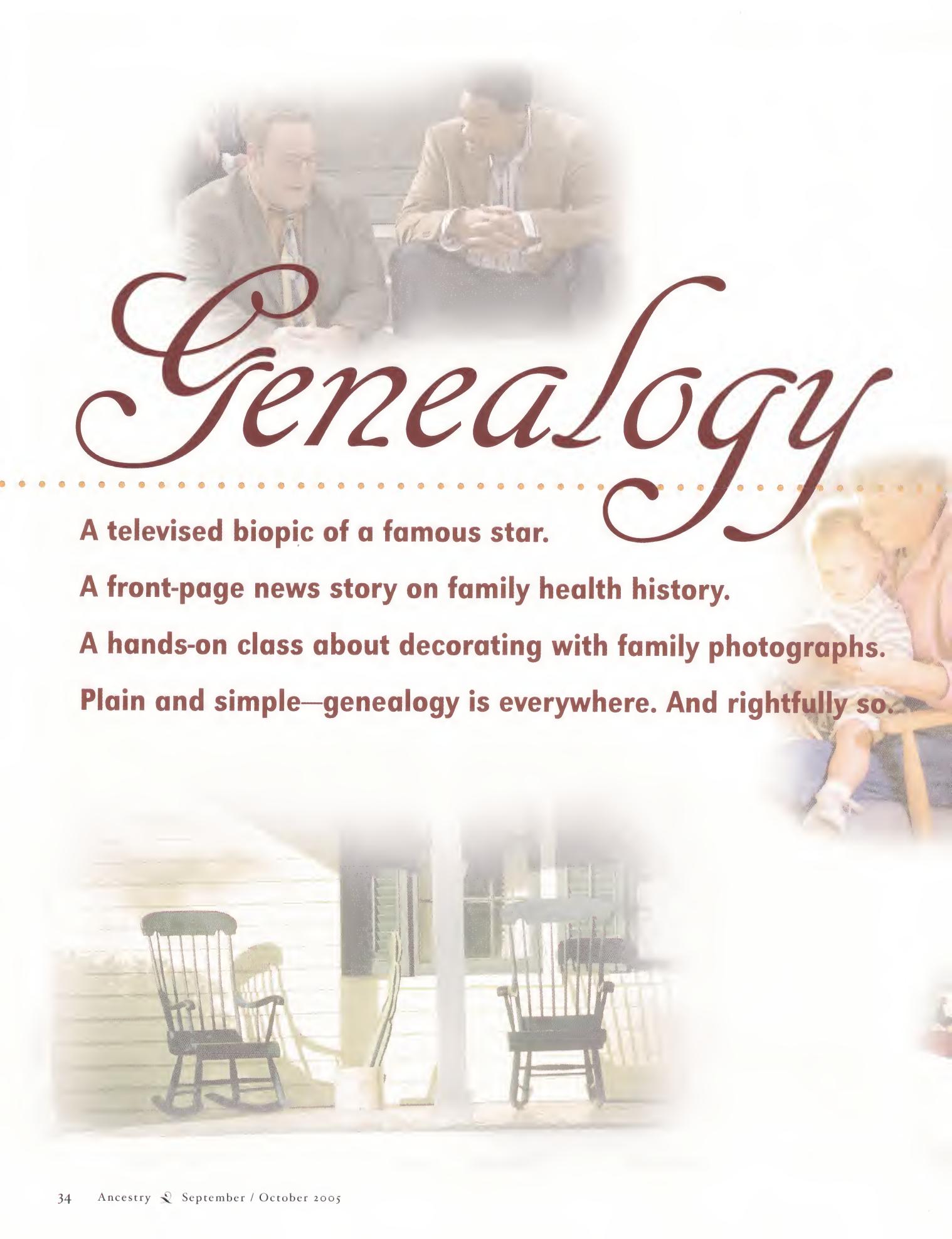
Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection at the University of Texas at Austin  
<[www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/index.html](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/index.html)>

University of Alabama Historical Map Archive <<http://alabamamaps.ua.edu/historicalmaps/index.html>>

USGenWeb Project <[www.usgenweb.org](http://www.usgenweb.org)>

WorldGenWebProject <[www.worldgenweb.org](http://www.worldgenweb.org)>





# *Genealogy*

.....

**A televised biopic of a famous star.**

**A front-page news story on family health history.**

**A hands-on class about decorating with family photographs.**

**Plain and simple—genealogy is everywhere. And rightfully so.**



# Everyday

What a difference a few decades makes. A hundred years ago, genealogists traced their pedigrees in dusty archives using pencil and paper. Today's genealogists benefit from fast answers and online searches, presenting their family histories in any number of forms.

While Alex Haley's book *Roots* and subsequent mini-series created an explosion of interest in family history just three decades ago, even then, few researchers would have imagined what advances in technology would do for the family historian.

Today, computers help people search for data, creating an international community of family historians with resources available 24/7. Other advances minimize dead ends and doubts, like DNA, for example, which offers researchers the opportunity to connect with family when traditional research fails to provide an answer.

What does this mean to the current family historian or the future one? Genealogy is accessible. Whenever. Wherever. And sometimes when we're not even looking, genealogy finds a new way into our everyday lives.

by Maureen A. Taylor

# Gardening

**G**enealogy is one of the single most popular hobbies in the United States, second only to gardening. While on the surface, the activities might seem like polar opposites, interestingly, they're very much connected.

Just like people and animals, plants have pedigrees. Our ancestors brought seeds with them to create gardens and grow crops, and many of those plants are still around with a lineage that connects them, and us, to our forebears. Those historic or heirloom plants are artifacts, same as the china, furniture, and other items passed from generation to generation.

Generally speaking, an heirloom plant is one that has been in cultivation for at least fifty years. The heirloom garden might be grown from heirloom seeds or bulbs, both of which are becoming increasingly available commercially,

as well as plants passed down from one generation to the next (passalongs).

One of the oldest heirloom gardens is at Monticello, the home of President Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson cultivated fruits and vegetables that were brought to the United States, saving both plants and seeds for the future.

Through the Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants <[www.monticello.org/chp](http://www.monticello.org/chp)>, visitors to Monticello can still see varieties of plants approximately two hundred years old and purchase a sampler of them to grow in their home gardens.

Heirloom vegetables are often considered tastier and more nutritious than today's commercially-developed hybrids; other attributes include the possible adaptive qualities of a crop grown in the same garden for decades and the unique genetic makeup passed down through a specific strain. But for the family historian, the real drive to nurture heirloom plants may be the desire to taste or smell a garden full of childhood memories.

Homegrown heirloom homages can include a household vegetable plot filled with seeds saved from year to year or a re-creation of Grandma's flower garden as depicted in family photos. And, whether they're the product of plants and bulbs harvested from a childhood home or seeds purchased from a local heirloom seed trader, tending these shoots creates a hands-on connection to the ancestor who planted the seeds of today's modern family.

**Watch out—squash plants cross-pollinate easily with other squash plants, including other varieties in your garden and possibly in your neighbor's garden. So as you're creating your own heirloom garden, just remember that the seeds you save from an exceptional butternut may not produce the same tasty treat the following year.**



# Scrapbooks, Cookbooks, and Collecting

Preserving family memories by telling a story is nothing new. Your grandparents probably spun yarns on the front porch, reminiscing about friends, family, and ancestors; their grandparents probably did the same. Your mother may have kept a diary or journal—you may have done so as well—and shoeboxes full of family photos, letters, or memorabilia may be passed down from generation to generation.

Scrapbooking, an art that results in a memory album of words and pictures, is a close cousin of genealogy. While preserving family memories by telling a story through photos and journaling is a key component of any scrapbook, adding pedigree charts and genealogical data to form a creative, individual expression is a hobby unique to the family historian. Magazines like *Memory Makers* <[www.memorymakersmagazine.com](http://www.memorymakersmagazine.com)> and *Creating Keepsakes* <[www.creatingkeepsakes.com](http://www.creatingkeepsakes.com)> can help spark design ideas and ways to keep old documents safe.

But not everyone collects memories through images. For others, food is an equally effective trigger.

- **Learn more about caring for treasures and mementos by reading Maureen Taylor's monthly installments of "Saving Your Family Treasures" in the *Ancestry Daily News*.**
- **Sign up to receive the free daily newsletter, or search for past articles by Taylor, at <[www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)>, learn/>.**

Family culinary history is thriving thanks to family cookbooks and foodie websites. Kathy Steligo's *Meals and Memories: How to Create Keepsake Cookbooks* teaches readers how to pass on special family dishes to their kids. In *Eat My Words: Reading Women's Lives through the Cookbooks They Wrote*, Janet Theophano shows readers how to look for clues about the women in their families by interpreting family recipes. For a well-rounded taste of the

melting pot that is America, consider the *American Ethnic Cookbook for Students* by Mark H. Zanger. And even the family historian whose family never kept recipe cards or cookbooks has a place online—at Leite's Culinaria <[www.leitesculinaria.com](http://www.leitesculinaria.com)> you can commiserate with others whose family recipes departed with their ancestors, while also reconnecting with your culinary heritage through heritage recollections of traditional ethnic cuisine. Be sure to browse the Writings and the Food History sections.

Still, for some family historians, collecting memories means collecting artifacts—postcards, watches, china, spoons, almost anything. Adding to these collections can mean weekends devoted to flea markets, attics, and eBay. Shows like the *Antiques Roadshow*, now in its tenth season, help fuel the collecting craze, encouraging collectors to not only learn the monetary value of their family's belongings, but to embrace the genealogical value behind the treasure as well.



# Mass Media

## BOOKS, FILMS, AND MADISON AVENUE

From the big screen to television, family history is a recurring topic for screen and television writers. Take, for example, the movie *Hitch*, in which the main character (played by actor Will Smith) takes his love interest to Ellis Island on their first date, where he has arranged for a private tour and for the register with her grandfather's name to be on display. Think about the family history twists in the *Star Wars* films, where family history is played out in real time through each installment.

Putting a genealogical twist on reality programming, PBS has developed two shows, *1900 House* and *Colonial House* in which participants get to experience ancestral life first hand. And, this fall, *History Detectives* are scheduled to tackle genealogical mysteries.

Genealogy in print is more than just reference books. Elizabeth Lowell's newest title, *Always Time to Die*, features a racy, young genealogist dodging death threats while trying to research a client's family roots, analyzing pictures, and sorting through DNA. In Tracy Chevalier's *Virgin Blue*, the main character goes to France and researches her Huguenot ancestry connecting with the past through dreams. Dan Brown's blockbuster hit, the *DaVinci Code* contains genealogical references to descendants of a biblical figure. J.R.R. Tolkein's classic *Lord of the Rings* trilogy (both the original books and the more recent films) includes a carefully crafted genealogy complete with extensive family trees (try searching the Baggins family tree at Ancestry.com from the Family Trees tab). Even Harry Potter has story lines that embrace family history: pure bloods delight in

and defend their heritage, and an entire chapter of *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* is devoted to describing the family tree of a single character, Sirius Black.

Madison Avenue isn't immune to the influence of genealogy—advertisers are increasingly using genealogy to sell goods and services. Next time you're at a magazine rack, pick up a few titles. Look for key words in advertisements like heritage and heirloom, in addition to genealogy, family history and just family. A cell phone company's claim to connect you to family and friends is family history-related, intentional or not. More deliberate connections between family history and products can be found in ads for cameras. Promotions for computer peripherals like scanners and photo editing software even feature family heritage in their product-in-use examples.

- **No, it's not exciting, but there's something to be said about the safety and security afforded by living a simple life—for you and your ancestors.**
- **Still, when you're ready to sink your teeth into a family history mystery, try a novel with a family history bent. Author Rett MacPherson, for example, specializes in such books—her main character, Torie O'Shea, is a genealogist whose work forms the basis of the series.**



# Health & Healing

- **Stumbling over causes of death in old documents? Consult a book like Paul Drake's, *What Did They Mean By That? A Dictionary of Historical and Genealogical Terms, Old and New (Heritage Books, 2000)* to find the modern-day translations.**

Not all of the genealogy surrounding us is related to leisure time activities. There are other professions that rely on genealogical research techniques and documents—and the practitioners aren't always genealogists or historians. Sometimes they're doctors.

While genealogists have been keeping track of those odd sounding diseases found in death records for years, this year the U.S. Surgeon General has launched the Family Health History initiative as well.

The initiative is intended to help individuals chart hereditary diseases and disease patterns in their own families. Software can be downloaded from the initiative website <[www.hhs.gov/familyhistory](http://www.hhs.gov/familyhistory)>.

Genograms, cousins to genealogical pedigree charts, help chart other family events including emotional relationships. First developed by Monica McGoldrick and Randy Gerson, these charts help psychologists identify pat-



terns in families, enabling them to understand a patient's background.

A genogram might chart which siblings parted ways, who divorced and subsequently remarried, which siblings were twins or triplets, and who was adopted. Optional data might include alcoholism, depression, living situations, and even family pets. Examples are available at Genopro.com <[www.genopro.com/genogram](http://www.genopro.com/genogram)>, or you can create your own family genogram with a program like *Smart Draw* <[www.smartdraw.com/specials/genealogy.asp](http://www.smartdraw.com/specials/genealogy.asp)>.

## How to Know It's Genealogy (Without Even Looking)

Found a great book or movie that you think will feed your genealogy craving, but you want to be certain before you make the commitment? Look for some of the following keywords to help determine whether your pop-genealogy find really touches on family history:

**Birthright  
Heirloom  
Heritage**

**Inheritance  
Legacy  
Patrimony**

**Pedigree  
Provenance  
Tradition**

Take it from Hollywood and Madison Avenue—today, it's cool to be a family historian, whether you're a teen or a centenarian. What's next? No one can say for sure. But it's a safe bet that if it caters to the millions of people who are already actively involved in genealogy and others who get their subtle genealogy fixes on the sly, it's guaranteed to be an instant success. ☺

Maureen A. Taylor is the author of *Uncovering Your Ancestry through Family Photographs* (Family Tree Books, 2005) and *Scrapbooking Your Family History* (Betterway, 2003). Send your comments and your latest family history sightings to Maureen at [mtaylor@taylorandstrong.com](mailto:mtaylor@taylorandstrong.com) (use "Genealogy Spotter" in the subject line).





# Secure the Shadow... Ere the Substance Fades

by Elizabeth Kelley Kerstens, CGRS, CGL

Someday you might run across an old photograph of someone who seems to be posed in an odd and unnatural way, or perhaps the person appears to be sleeping. It's just possible that you will have stumbled upon a fairly rare—from a collector's standpoint—form of photography known as postmortem photography.

Postmortem photography, or *memento mori*, was used to capture the image of a loved one who had just died. This practice was particularly popular during the latter half of the nineteenth century, although the practice persists today in some cultures.

To our early twenty-first-century sensibilities, this photographic practice may appear morbid, but to the procurers and owners of such photos, the practice was necessary and normal for dealing with grief. Death was a common occurrence in the nineteenth century, and every household was touched by it. In the United States in 1850, the average life expectancy at birth was 38.9 years; this life expectancy had risen only to 49.6 years by 1900. Similarly, the infant mortality rate in 1850 was 217.4 per 1,000 births; that number decreased by nearly 50 percent to 120.1 per 1,000 births by 1900.

With so much death around them, Victorian Americans dealt with grief very differently than we do today. Mourning

was very much a part of everyday life in the nineteenth century, accompanied by mourning symbols such as jewelry, black crepe and wreaths, and prescribed clothing for the mourning period. As advances were made in medical science and funerary practices, however, views toward open expression of grief changed. According to Jay Ruby, author of *Secure the Shadow*, "From the beginning of the twentieth century until the 1970s, death became a forbidden subject among the 'Americanized' middle class."

## Photographing death

Photography was invented in 1839 by Louis Daguerre in France. The first form that photographs took was called the "daguerreotype" after the founder of the method. Daguerreotypes quickly became popular in the United States. Many people who would never have been able to afford a painted portrait were able to afford to sit for the new photographic process. In *Sleeping Beauty: Memorial Photography in America*, author Stanley Burns notes that during the period 1841–60, "an estimated 30 million daguerreotypes of all types [were] taken in America." Yet, because of the high mortality rates, there were many people that were never able to get their photograph taken while alive.

Enter the entrepreneurial professional photographer. To help generate more business, photographers advertised that they took postmortem photos in a timely manner. Grieving family members could contact these photographers and have the photos taken either in the studio or in the home of the deceased.

During this time period, it was popular to make the deceased appear to be in a deep sleep. To accomplish this, the person was placed on a sofa or bed in the home and posed comfortably, with eyes closed and head possibly propped on a pillow (figure 1 and figure 2). This was the pose most commonly found by author Ruby in his study of the period 1840 to 1880. Frequently props were added to the setting, such as a toy, a cross, or even flowers. Props such as these, when found in a photo, may help clarify if the person was alive or dead at the time.

Another popular method of posing the deceased attempted to make the person appear to be alive by the positioning of the body. Many images show the person sitting in a chair, or the image may be positioned vertically to give the appearance that the person is sitting upright. Occasionally, the eyes of the deceased might have been left open, or the image was doctored to make the eyes appear to be open.

During the early years of postmortem photography, it was common to obtain close-up images of adults and full-body images of children (figure 3). Additionally, at the time, caskets weren't always readily available, so bodies were placed on boards with ice underneath to preserve them in the interim. After the Civil War, embalming became more



Figure 1. An 1840s Daguerreotype. The subject appears to be sleeping—a common pose in postmortem photography at the time. Photo courtesy of Tom Genova.



Figure 2. Civil War-era carte-de-visite with subject also in a sleeping pose. Image courtesy of Dale Niesen.



Figure 3. 1860s full-body, carte-de-visite of a child. Photo courtesy of Tom Genova.

common and bodies could be photographed in their final resting place inside the casket (figure 4).

Sometimes parents posed with a dead child in their arms or on a lap. These photos may have been designed to show the great emotion that the parent felt at the loss of his or her child, or there may be no evidence of emotion at all. These images characteristically show the child with his or her eyes closed—an easy way to determine that the child was not alive at the time of the photograph. A variation on this theme was to have a parent or spouse pose for the photo in mourning clothes, holding an image of the deceased.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the acceptance of postmortem photographs was starting to change. At that time, images began to appear of a flower-draped coffin with a living photo of the deceased on top (figure 5). These images were frequently taken in the parlor of the home, where most people were laid out before their funerals. This practice was common until the advent of the funeral home later in the twentieth century.

Throughout this period, it was not uncommon to find postmortem photos liberally sprinkled among the photo collections of the living, atop mantles or pianos in parlors across America. Additionally, copies of the photos would often be made and sent to family members that were unable to attend the funeral.



Figure 4. 1850s ambrotype. Until embalming became more common, it was rare to find a photo of a body in a coffin. Photo courtesy of Tom Genova.

## Finding postmortem photographs

Some families have postmortem images in their photo collections and may not even know it. It's easy to spot one of these images if the deceased rests in a coffin. But the postmortem images that are more difficult to identify are those where the person is dead but made to look alive, or even the images of those who appear asleep. Ask family members if you can see all of their older photos, and you may spot one of these. If you don't, it's quite possible that the images may have existed but twentieth-century relatives may not have understood their purpose and discarded them. In that case, you may find images in collections on the Internet, such as:

### Dead Fred: Genealogy Photo Archive

<<http://www.deadfred.com/>>

### Postmortem Photography

<<http://www.anamorfose.be/postmortem.htm>>

### Thanatos.net

<<http://thanatos.net/>>

### Tear Drop Memories

<<http://pages.teardropmemories.com/11601/InventoryPage/1744192/1.html>>

### Postmortem Photographs

<<http://billblanton.com/march03.htm>>

## Dating the photograph

Attempting to place a postmortem photo into a time period may or may not be a straightforward process. Start the identification process by determining the type of photo, i.e. daguerreotype, carte-de-visite, or other format. Time frames for the various processes can be found below. Many books and websites, including



Figure 5. An example of a coffin covered with flowers and a photo of the person while alive. Photo courtesy of Plymouth Historical Museum.

the following, point out the characteristics of the photographic formats by time period:

Burns, Stanley B. *Sleeping Beauty: Memorial Photography in America*. N.P.: Twelvetrees Press, 1990.

Gernsheim, Alison. *Victorian and Edwardian Fashion: A Photographic Survey*. New York: Dover Publications, 1981.

Leggatt, Robert. *A History of Photography from Its Beginnings to the 1920s*. Online at <<http://www.rleggat.com/photohistory/>>.

Newhall, Beaumont. *The History of Photography*. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1982.

Nickell, Joe. *Camera Clues: A Handbook for Photographic Investigation*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1994.

Taylor, Maureen A. *Uncovering Your Ancestry Through Family Photographs*. Cincinnati: Betterway Books, 2000.

The following table gives a very broad overview of photographic formats by time period. For more specifics, please consult one of the suggested resources listed above.

## Spirit photography

Spiritualism became popular in the United States in the latter half of the nineteenth century, concurrent with the growth in photographic processes. Because many people believed that spirits appeared during seances, some enterprising photographers discovered ways to "capture" the essence of these spirits using photographic methods. Despite the exposure as frauds of many of the photographers and mediums, the craze ran rampant throughout the country.

The photographers created their images using several different techniques. If someone had recently died, the photographer obtained an image of the person and double-exposed that image as a ghost onto another photograph. Some other photographers had people pose in shrouds and would use these images along with customers' images to produce the desired result (figure 6). Sometimes the "ghost" images were recognized by fellow citizens, but the holder of the image often saw what he or she wanted to see because of grief. Other tricks were used in the dark room, including creating pre-exposed plates prior to a seance or photographic sitting.

## Funeral cards

Funeral cards were prepared for family members and friends as a remembrance of the deceased. The cardstock cards usually measured about 4" x 6" and contained funerary symbolism and one of a selection of verses. They also contained some vital statistics about the deceased, including birth and death dates. In later years, these cards frequently contained an image taken of the deceased while alive (figure 7).

Companies that printed the funeral cards would search the local papers for obituaries, prepare a card, and send it quickly to the next of kin on speculation. A price list accompanied the funeral card so the family would know how to purchase additional cards, if desired. Word of mouth helped to make these cards popular and eventually people would approach the printers with their own requests. These types of memorials still exist today, offered by funeral homes in paper form.

Timeframe	Type	Characteristics
1840–1860	Daguerreotype	Silver-coated copper image in a case
1841–1851	Calotype	Paper negative
1854–1865	Ambrotype	Glass image in a case
1853–1880s	Tintype	Thin sheet of iron, not in a case
1859–1875	Carte-de-visite (CDV)	Paper image pasted on 2.5 x 4" card
1870–1905	Cabinet Card	Paper image pasted on 4.25 x 6.5" card



Figure 6. An 1860s example of spirit photography. Images courtesy of Tom Genova.

## Conclusion

Many of us are fortunate to inherit family photographs that give us glimpses into the lives of our forebears. Those of us who have found postmortem images in these collections should be able to empathize with the pain and grief felt surrounding the premature loss of a parent, spouse, or child. Instead of being repelled by the image, we can better understand our ancestors by appreciating *why* postmortem photography was popular in the nineteenth century. ↗

*Elizabeth Kelley Kerstens, CGRS, CGL, is the managing editor of Genealogical Computing and the NGS NewsMagazine and a frequent contributor to Ancestry Magazine.*

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- Joe Nickell. *Camera Clues: A Handbook for Photographic Investigation* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1994), 146–59.
- Elizabeth Kelley Kerstens, CGRS. “Funeral Cards.” *Ancestry Magazine*. September/October 1999, 14–20.



Figure 7. Funeral card with image. Courtesy of Marilyn Erps.

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**E**very week, hundreds of people discover a new pastime—collecting ancestors. And the computer may be the main reason for this phenomenal growth.

The computer is almost as common in homes today as a television or a telephone. Improvements are constantly being made to popular genealogy software programs making them easier to use and making electronic storage capabilities much more efficient. And finally, nothing has revolutionized the hobby in quite the way that the Internet has.

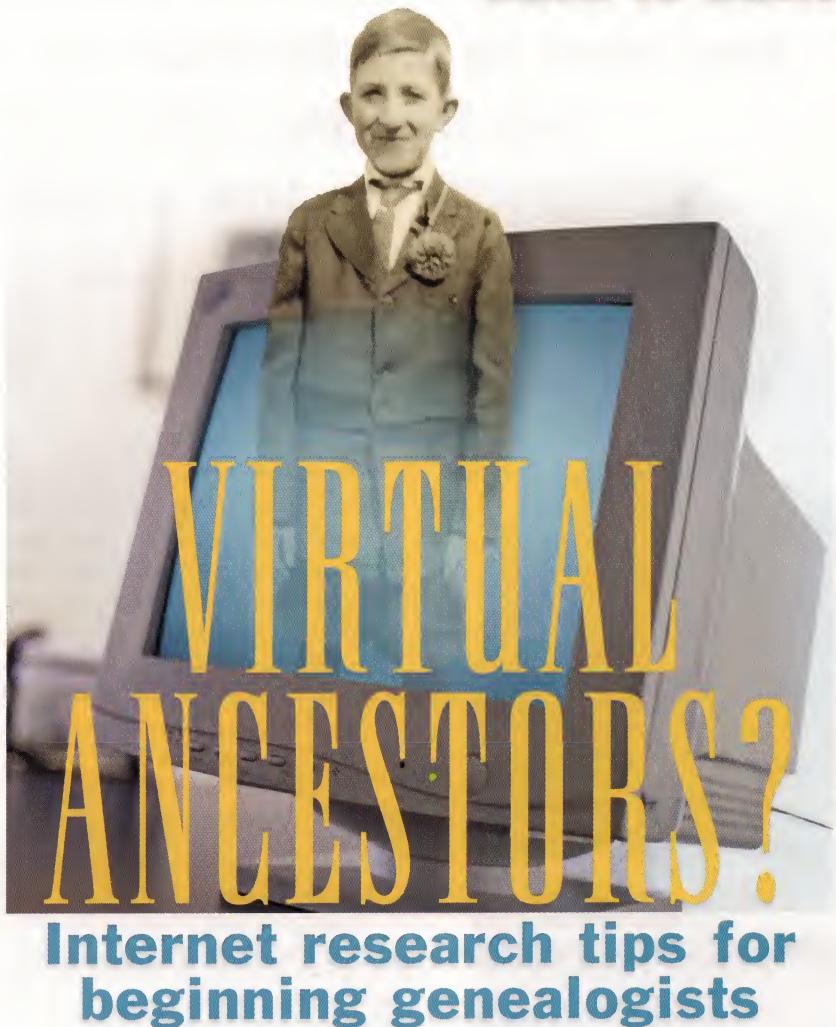
Unfortunately, there are plenty of people wanting to learn more about their family history who just aren't prepared to tap into the full potential of computerized genealogy research. For some, it's because of underdeveloped computer skills; for others, it's due to unrealistic expectations about the Internet. However, developing an understanding of some basic computer and genealogy skills can help beginner genealogists maximize their electronic research efforts.

## Unrealistic expectations

One of the most common problems for beginners involves unrealistic expectations as to what they will find on the Internet. Whether this is due to advertising, television programs, or testimonials from friends as to how easy it is, some people seem to think there is nothing to computerized genealogy research. They believe that, like a CSI tech, they have only to type in a name, and their entire family history spanning the past two hundred years will appear.

Nothing is further from the truth.

There is no magic to genealogical research on the World Wide Web—while resources are available at your fingertips, you may still have to work to find the answers you need. And, in turn, while you might be able to locate



## Internet research tips for beginning genealogists

BY TERRY AND JIM WILLARD

a family tree online, you'll still want to document every detail as carefully as possible.

### Lack of basic computer skills

The second most common problem for beginners is a lack of computer skills necessary to effectively perform Internet searches. To see how your skills measure up, read through the following list and rate yourself on your ability to perform each task. As you read, ask yourself: "Do I know . . . ?"

- How to use the scroll bar?
- How to use the Up and Down arrows on the keyboard?

— How and when to point, click, double click, or drag?

— How to get to a website?

— How to use the **Back** and **Forward** buttons on the Internet browser?

— How to add Favorites or Bookmarks?

— How to create a organize Favorites or Bookmarks?

— How to use Search History?

### Improving your effort

Once you are comfortable with basic computer skills, the following more advanced skills will further improve your Internet searches:

# To be an effective online researcher, you need to cut through the irrelevant content and find the information and links that might prove valuable.



1. Master the art of skimming a Web page. Internet pages are extremely busy—there tends to be an enormous amount of content on any given page. To be an effective online researcher, you need to cut through the irrelevant content and find the information and links that might prove valuable. Also, know how to discriminate between ads and content. Beginners can easily waste valuable time clicking on what seems like an important link that turns out to be an ad. If you're using a dial-up connection, that lost time can be enough to discourage further research.

**TIP**

**Use the Stop button on the browser tool bar to interrupt an incorrect Web page while loading. Click the Back button to return to the original page.**

2. Learn how to copy and paste. Many times information found on the Internet needs to be entered into a genealogy software program or a word processing program. Once you are comfortable with selecting text, practice copying and pasting that text into the appropriate program.

**TIP**

**After selecting the desired text, point anywhere in the highlighted area and click the right mouse button. Choose Copy from the resulting drop-down menu. Use a right mouse click again to Paste the information into your desired program.**

3. Utilize the Find feature. Choosing Find (located on the Edit menu in *Internet Explorer* or on the Search menu in *Netscape Navigator*) opens a search box. Type in the text you are searching for on that page—a family surname for example—and press **Enter**. If the desired text is on the Web page you are viewing, it will appear highlighted on the screen. To find the next reference to the same text, choose **Find Next**.

**TIP**

**Try the keyboard shortcut for Find, **Ctrl+f**.**

4. Know how to control the printer with the following printing skills:

- Printing a single page.
- Printing a portion of a page (selection).
- Printing a range of pages.
- Stopping an unwanted print job.

**TIP**

**If you've ever started to print some seemingly important information related to your research only to discover that it's forty-three pages instead of just the one that you wanted, you'll understand the importance of stopping a print job. So how do you do it? Try the following: If you're using a computer running Windows, go to the Control Panel and choose Printers and Other Hardware (use the Start menu to access**

**the Control Panel). Select your printer, then select the document you want to cancel and chose Cancel from the Documents menu or Cancel All Documents from the Printer menu. The other, less technical and less reliable option is to turn off the printer and remove its paper supply. Remember, however not to grab the paper as its entering the printer—this can hurt the paper advance mechanism. While this option takes fewer steps, most of today's printers retain documents in memory, which means that once you turn the printer back on your unwanted document may continue to print anyway.**

Other tips that will make your search more productive include the following:

- Repeat searches. New content is added to the Internet every day. A search that produced no results one day could prove very different in a week or a month.
- Use multiple search engines. No single search engine can cover the entire Web. Try using the same search terms in two separate search engines to see how different your results can be.
- Learn to search message boards. Many websites have message boards where researchers can post queries. Reading through the answers to other people's questions may provide you with the information you are seeking.
- Use alternate spellings. Remember, family names are not always spelled the same way. Try as many different spellings as possible in your surname searches and use Soundex for phonetic

searches whenever it's a search option.

- Change the order of the names you are searching. Some search engines look only for the words you enter in the order they are entered. Try reversing the word order, even on names, to see if you receive more results.
- Learn which words work best. Sometimes using a + or – sign can refine your search terms; other times the words and or or can help. Learn which approach works best with your favorite search engine.
- Use the Help menu. Check the Help menu in each new search engine you use as it may recommend additional ways of making your searches more successful.
- Take a class or join a computer users group. The more general information you can acquire, the better you will be at locating ancestors on the Internet.

Good computer skills alone are not enough to guarantee successful online research—you also need good genealogy skills. Listed below are four fundamental skills that will help any genealogist:

- Be organized.
- Have a clearly-defined research objective.
- Document the location of any information found.
- Keep a To-Do list of possible future sites to visit.

Remember, there is no single approach that will lead to successful online genealogy research. Be open to all possibilities, and in no time you will have more information than you ever thought possible. ☺

*Terry and Jim Willard hosted the ten-part PBS Ancestors series. They have researched their family history fifteen generations back on both sides.*

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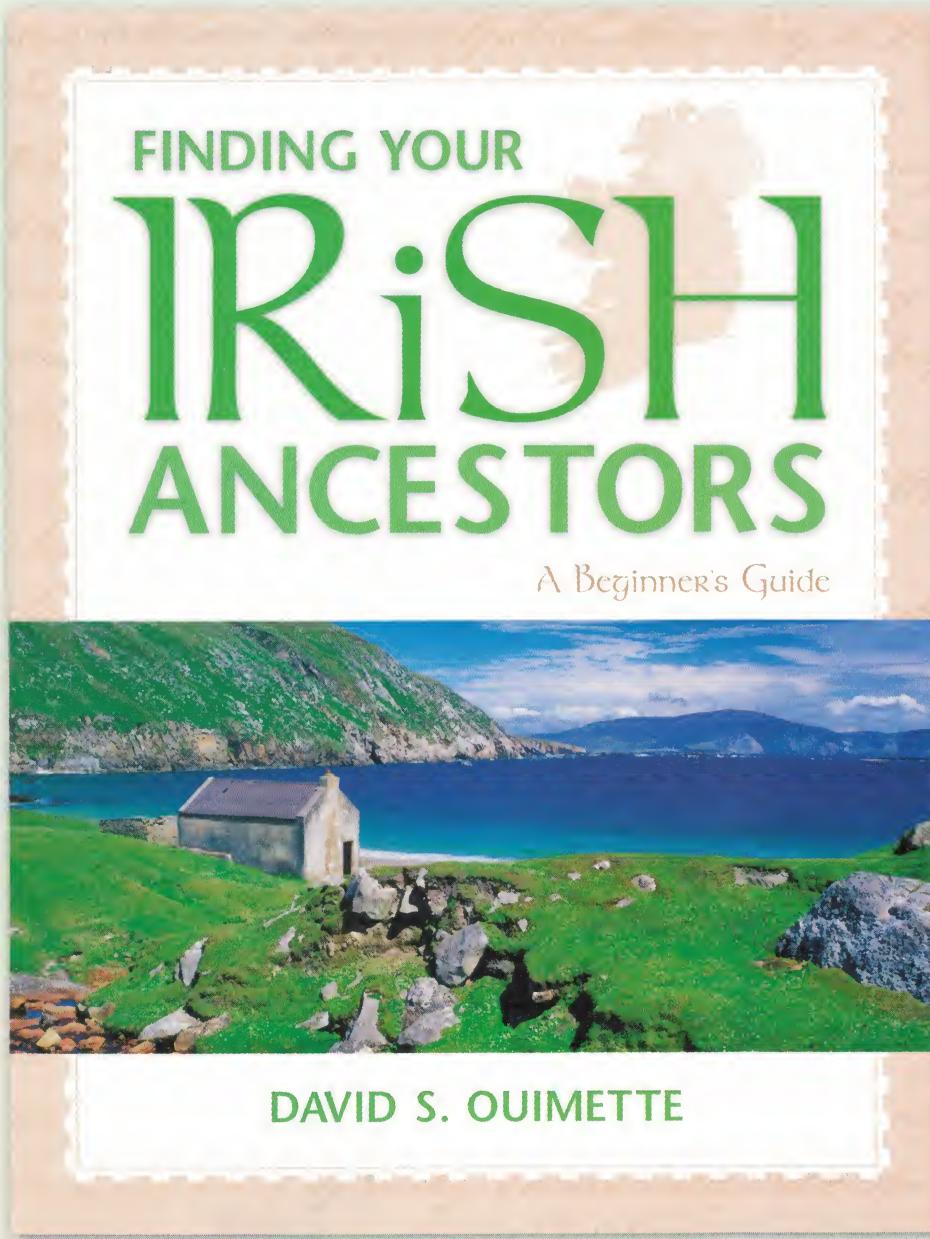


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*“Oh, that  
happened three  
generations  
ago.”*

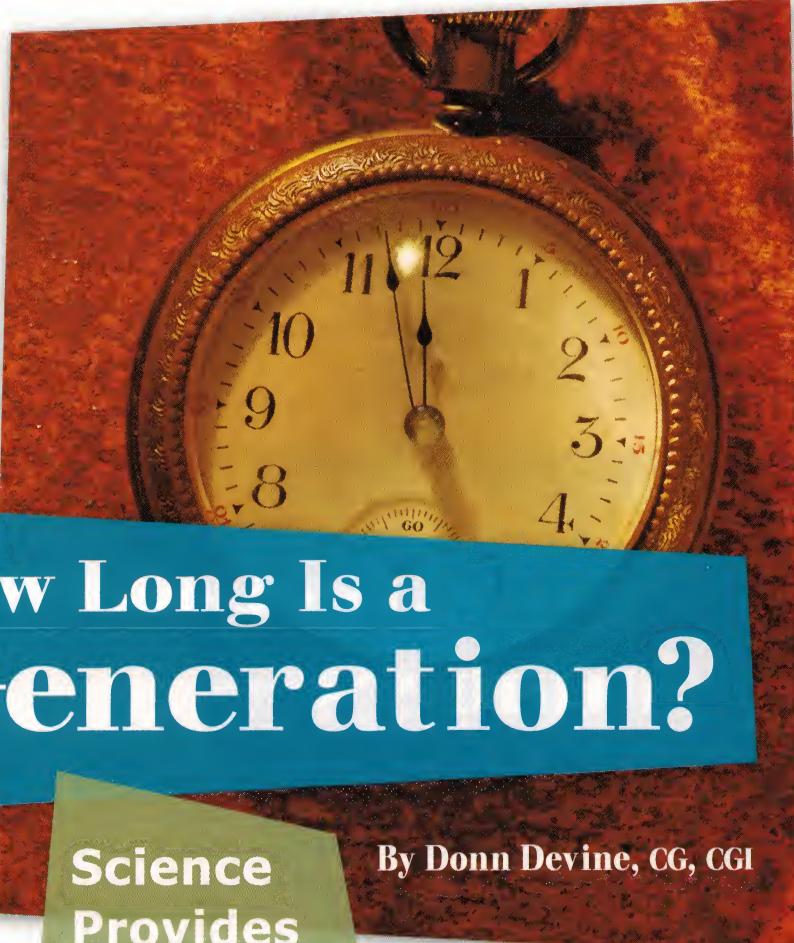
We often reckon the passage of time by generations, but just how long is a generation?

As a matter of common knowledge, we know that a generation averages about 25 years—from the birth of a parent to the birth of a child—although it varies case by case. We also generally accept that the length of a generation was closer to 20 years in earlier times when humans mated younger and life expectancies were shorter.

In genealogy, the length of a generation is used principally as a check on the credibility of evidence—too long a span between parent and child, especially in a maternal line, has been reason to go back and take a more careful look at whether the evidence found reflects reality or whether a generation has been omitted or data for two different individuals has been attributed to the same person. For that purpose, the 20- and 25-year averages have worked quite acceptably; birth dates too far out of line with the average are properly suspect.

But now, researchers are finding that facts differ from what we've always assumed—generations may actually be longer than estimates previously indicated.

Several recent studies show that male-line generations, from father to son, are longer on average than



## How Long Is a Generation?

**Science Provides an Answer**

By Donn Devine, CG, CGI

female-line generations, from mother to daughter. They show, too, that both are longer than the 25-year interval that conventional wisdom has assigned a generation. The male generation is at least a third longer; the female generation is about one-sixth longer.

As early as 1973, archaeologist Kenneth Weiss questioned the accepted 20- and 25-year generational intervals, finding from an analysis of prehistoric burial sites that 27 years was a more appropriate interval but recognizing that his conclusion could have been affected if community members who died away from the village were buried elsewhere.

### Why Age Matters

In a more-recent study regarding generation length, sociologist Nancy Howell calculated average generational intervals among present-day members of the !Kung, contemporary hunter-gatherer people of Botswana and Namibia whose lifestyle is relatively similar to that of our pre-agricultural ancestors. The average age of mothers at the birth of their first child was 20 years and at the last birth 31, giving a mean of 25.5 years per female generation—considerably above the 20 years often attributed to primitive cultures. Fathers were six to 13 years older than mothers, giving

a male generational interval of 31 to 38 years.

A separate study, conducted by population geneticists Marc Tremblay and Hélène Vézina, was based on 100 ascending Quebec genealogies. Researchers found a generational interval, based on the years between parents' and children's marriages, to average 31.7 years, and they determined that male generations averaged 35.0 years while female generations averaged 28.7 years.

Biological anthropologist Agnar Helgason and colleagues used the Icelandic deCODE genetics database to arrive at a female line interval of 28.12 years for the most recent generations and 28.72 years for the whole lineage length. Male line lineages showed a similar difference—31.13 years for the recent generations and 31.93 years overall. For a more mathematically appealing average, Helgason and fellow researchers recommended estimating female generational line intervals at 30 years and male generational intervals at 35 years, based on the Quebec and Iceland studies.

## Calculating Ideas

What does this mean to the genealogist? When assigning dates to anthropologically common ancestors 50 or more generations in the past, using the "accepted" 20 or 25 years as a conversion factor can produce substantial underestimates of the time interval.

For my own purposes, however, given the imprecision of the various results and my own need for an estimate that lends itself to easy calculation, I decided that three generations per century (33 years each) for male lines and 3.5 generations per century (29 years each) for female lines, might work better when I needed to convert generations into years.

# Crunching Ancestral Numbers

With the growing application of DNA testing to both anthropology and genealogy, the length of a generation takes on far more importance than it had in the past. Many conclusions from DNA evidence in both disciplines are frequently expressed in terms of generations back to a common ancestor, based on the very slow rate at which random changes or mutations take place in DNA patterns over a number of generations.

Look at the Y-DNA that is passed down substantially unchanged from father to son in the male line as an example. We can expect a random mutation to occur once in 500 generations. If we look at 25 distinct DNA markers from two descendants of the same ancestor in all-male lines, the following formula can be used to determine how often we should expect to see a change:

$$\frac{\text{# of generations for a single random mutation}}{\text{number of markers tested}} = \frac{\text{how often a change will occur in a single DNA marker}}{}$$

In this case, the calculation would be as follows:

$$\frac{500 \text{ generations}}{25 \text{ markers}} = 20 \text{ generations per one single marker change}$$

Mathematically, we can expect that one of these markers would change for every 20 generational

events that separate the two men. So what does all of this mean?

If the common ancestor was 10 generations back from each descendant in our example (therefore they were separated from each other by 20 generational events), a single mutation on average might have occurred in either one of the two lines. If the common ancestor was 20 generations back, thus separating the descendants by 40 generational events, we could expect a mutation in each line.

Using the traditionally-accepted value of four generations per century, 10 generations would place the common ancestor only 250 years in the past, in the mid-eighteenth century, suggesting a further search in records of that period for evidence pointing toward the relationship. However, a longer three-generation per century interval (indicated by recent research) would place the common ancestor in the late 1600s, resulting in a greatly-reduced chance of finding further documentary evidence bearing on the relationship.

Taking it a step further, if the common ancestor lived 20 generations back, the 25-year interval would place him about the year 1500, about at the outer limit of genealogically useful records except for kings and nobles. New, higher estimates would place the common ancestor over 700 years in the past, beyond the scope of genealogical research methods.

To check the accuracy of my values, I decided to compare the generational intervals from all-male or all-female ranges in my own family lines for the years 1700 to 2000. I was pleasantly surprised to see how closely the intervals agreed with the estimates I was using. For a total of 21 male-line generations among five lines, the average interval was close to 34 years per generation. For 19 female-line generations from four lines, the average was an exact 29 years per generation.

In genealogy, conclusions about relationships are subject to change whenever better evidence is discovered. Similarly, it's the nature of the physical and biological sciences that current understandings are subject to change as more data becomes available and that data's

interpretation becomes more certain. So, for now, when genealogists want to convert generations to years and create probable date ranges, using an evidence-based generational interval—like Helgason's 30 and 35 years or one that you've developed based on your own family history research—may be the best solution. ↗

*Donn Devine, CG<sup>SM</sup>, CGI<sup>SM</sup>, a genealogical consultant from Wilmington, Delaware, is an attorney for the city and archivist of the Catholic Diocese of Wilmington. He is a former National Genealogical Society board member; currently chairs its Standards Committee, is a trustee of the Board for Certification of Genealogists, and is the administrator for Devine and Baldwin DNA surname projects.*

## Resources

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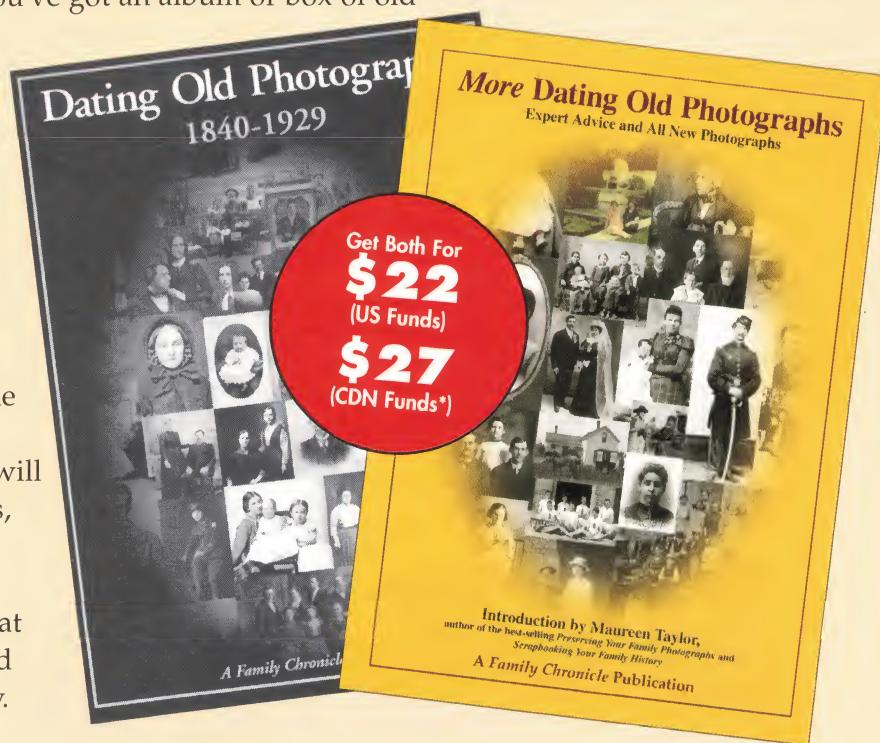
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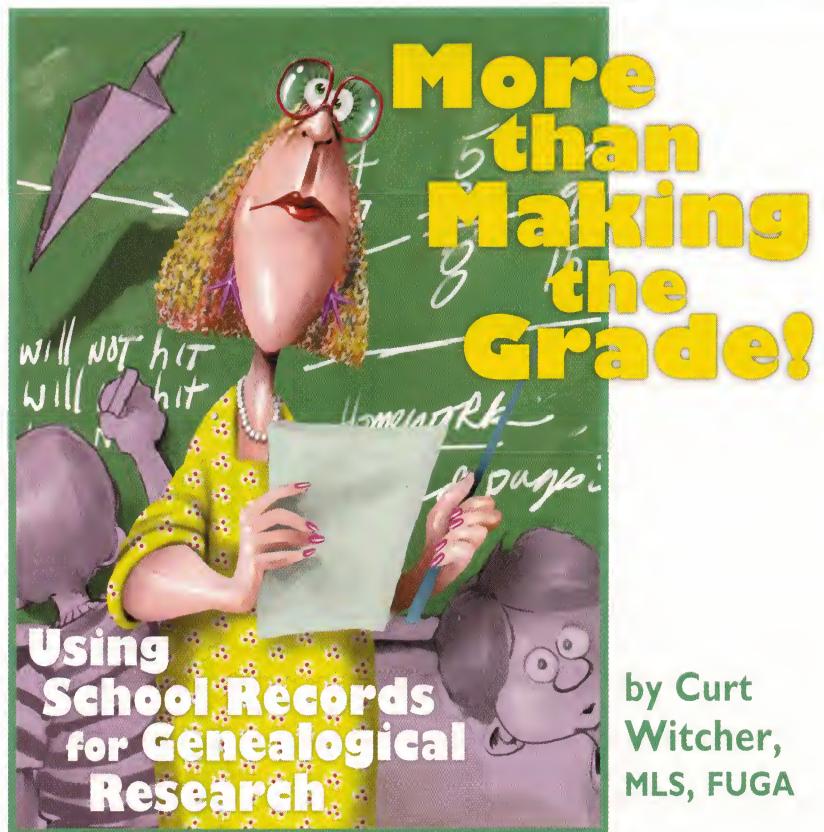
While energetic youth rarely look forward to the beginning of school in the late summer, genealogists should still take note: due to the types of records and publications schools generate and the importance of schools in communities, school records are a valuable resource.

Among the more commonly used school records are attendance rolls and grade registers. While some people may not initially think to look to these documents for historical and family information, a closer look often reveals some interesting pieces of data.

## Taking Notes

Many teachers, famous for their razor-sharp precision and their enormous attention to detail, used rolls and registers for recording more refined data than the preprinted column headings actually called for. For example, the 1919 grade registers for Lincoln School in Allen County, Indiana, serve both as a record of achievement and a record of attendance. Not only are days present and days absent recorded along with subject area grades, but the reasons for the absences are also noted. Of particular significance are the individuals noted as having "moved away" or "moved to city." This type of data can help explain why a family doesn't appear on a census as expected, as well as assist in more precisely indicating when a particular family may have moved in or moved out of a community.

Fannie Pratt, a teacher at the Washington township school of Wallen in Allen County, Indiana, did an even more thorough job in documenting why her pupils were not in class on a particular day. In addition to noting if a particular child stayed home because of the flu, the mumps, chicken pox, or exposure to diphtheria, she also notes if the child stayed home to take care of a sick parent or grandparent. Other reasons recorded for absences include



by Curt Witcher, MLS, FUGA

"attended a wedding," "death in family," "stayed home to help butcher," "death of grandmother," "moved to LaOtto," "attending Catholic school," "shoe mended," "kicked by a horse," and "father seriously ill." Careful analysis of such a school register may provide valuable clues about when a family moved to another farm, suffered a death in the family, or married off a son or daughter.

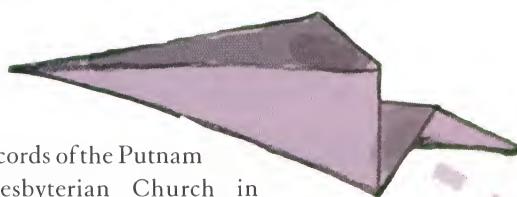
An additional feature of school documents is the "register of visitors" in the back of many grade and attendance books. Parents, grandparents, school administrators, and even local officials who visited the classroom can be found with notations, such as where they resided.

## Well-Rounded Education

Skilled researchers often use one set of records to provide clues to refine another set of records. Attendance and grade registers can be just such a refining set of documents.

Acquiring and searching through numerous years of un-indexed newspapers for news about a family—a marriage announcement, an obituary, or simply a visit from an out-of-town relative—can be a daunting task. Using school records to assist in identifying a more exact time period for an event can make the search more manageable. For example, if you know that a funeral took place between 5 March and 30 March 1923, and that three children of the same family attended, you can check school records for the dates the children were absent. That information can focus your search for the death announcement to a more specific range of dates.

Aside from grade and attendance registers, there are a number of other original records that relate to schools and school activities. Private and religious schools, as well as some public schools, often kept detailed logs of teachers and parents. The 1847 through 1870 Sabbath School



records of the Putnam Presbyterian Church in Zanesville, Ohio, provide detailed student rosters, lists of teachers with their salaries, superintendent reports, particulars of medical challenges facing the school population, and building and construction initiatives. Even newspaper clippings and copies of programs are among the logs' pages.

Records of the legal and business aspects of schools can also be quite useful. Records of the Board of Education for Cabell County, West Virginia, for the years immediately following the Civil War provide the researcher with the names of parents of school-aged children, their residence, and the names and ages of their children. Physical descriptions of the districts are provided with the names of the commissioners. Meeting minutes provide information on issues facing the schools as well as itemized payments made to area individuals for goods and services.

Over the years, local and state jurisdictions enacted laws that required enumerations to be taken to determine how much of the area's financial resources and tax revenues needed to be designated for schools and educational purposes. As might be expected with any type of census record, these "school censuses" afford great detail to complement other census schedules and fill in gaps when federal and state population schedules do not exist. Typically these censuses give the names of parents and children, residences, ages and/or dates of birth of the children, and the census date. Some also record race and the sex of the children.

## Fieldtrips

The first, best place to begin a search for school records is at the local level—at the school itself. However, as is often the case for genealogists, the school may no longer exist. In these situations,

check the holdings of local historical societies and even the public library.

Public libraries also serve as repositories of local organizational and institutional records. Records can be found in special collections, reference collections, and vertical files. Genealogists should also look for these records to be abstracted, transcribed, and indexed in local genealogy and historical society periodicals held by libraries—the next best thing to looking at the actual document.

If you're not certain of the periodical publication in which a school record abstract or index might appear, the *PERiodical Source Index* or *PERSI* is an excellent resource to consult. This online database is a comprehensive index to published works in genealogy and local history periodical literature. And there is a separate designation specifically for "school records." A search for "school records" for Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, for example, produces forty-six references, including a Mount Joy school census and the Locust Grove Mennonite School data.

In addition to these official school documents, libraries may also have scrapbooks of newspaper clippings about school activities, letters from former teachers and students, and even published diaries.

## A Very Good Year

In addition to original school records, another extremely valuable group of records are the publications of those educational institutions. School directories and yearbooks are interesting and genealogically valuable finds. For example, in the seventy-page first edition of *The Saw-Briar*, the publication of the Annville Institute in eastern Kentucky, all of the resident halls (including hand-drawn sketches of the buildings and the names of the deans or matrons) are listed. Actual photographs are glued into lined

frames to highlight the faculty and the various classes.

The faculty roster includes the home towns of the teachers, their academic careers and teaching careers, and the various subjects they teach at Annville. The yearbook editors attribute positive characteristics to each instructor's initials (Miss Emily E. Heusinkveld was said to be *Entertaining, Earnest, and Helpful*).

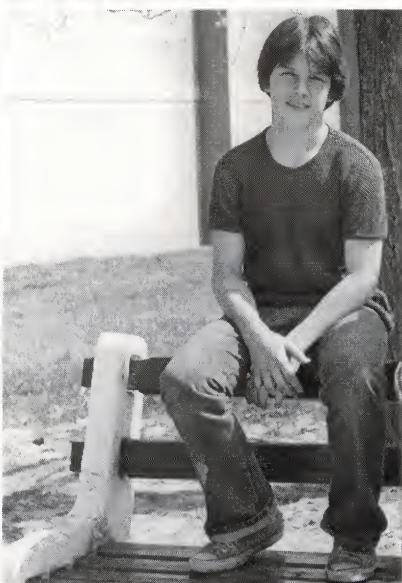
The class rosters provide personal information about the students like residences, nicknames, and a history of classes taken. Other information includes class histories, class officers, a recounting of school plays, and notes of athletic conquests.

The yearbooks and directories of alumni associations and reunion organizations can be another good source. Alumni organization publications can provide amazing quantities of data—early volumes typically contain more personal and genealogical information while the later volumes tend to be more like telephone books, listing current addresses, years of graduation, and degrees awarded.

The *Harvard Class of 1917—Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Report* contains more than one thousand pages. Addresses, nativity data, where the student went to school before Harvard, degrees bestowed by Harvard, marital status, children, other family members who attended Harvard, occupation, military service, and offices held in organizations are included for each student. Many of the sketches even contain information from autobiographical narratives.

As an example, Harvard alumni William Ashford's narrative is nine paragraphs long and contains information from the days immediately after his graduation to the time of the twenty-fifth anniversary. We learn a lot about Mr. Ashford's family history, a significant amount about him as a person, and we also gain a touch of his

pected source—the British Broadcasting Corporation. "I was contacted several months ago because they're doing a documentary on Tom Cruise," says John,



who was rector and guardian in 1978, the year Tom Cruise Mapother ('80) attended St. Francis High School Seminary in Mt. Healthy. But the phone call wasn't the end of the story. June 6, the BBC sent a crew to Cincinnati to interview and film John and Hilarion in the chapel of the old seminary, talking about their former student. They asked John about Tom's background: "His mother was struggling to support three children," John recalled.

Alumni association newsletters, like this one from the Franciscan Alumni Association regarding former student Tom Cruise, can provide interesting facts about former students.

personality and wit. "I am unmarried," he writes, "a fact that bothers my friends much more than it does me. I console myself by rationalizing my misfortune into the belief that teachers, like priests and artists, should be free to devote themselves entirely to their learning and their students."

The Franciscan Alumni Association irregularly publishes both a newsletter and a membership directory that provides remarkable details about individuals who were part of the St. John the Baptist Province's formation program and who attended St. Francis Seminary in Mt. Healthy, Ohio. Class rosters are frequently published with current cities of residence. Old photographs of seminary and

province activities are reprinted as are contemporary pictures from recent reunions. Numerous narratives of current activities of alumni are also included. Students and faculty alike are given significant attention in this very small organization's publications. And you never know whose seldom-seen photographs might show up—in St. Francis's publication, it's Tom Cruise.

Faculty directories are yet another class of school directories. The majority of these were published since the 1930s. Earlier editions tend to arrange schools by township, listing the principal and teachers with their associated grades and residences, as well as enumerating bus drivers. They also may contain data about other entities in the area that interacted with the schools or housed and cared for students taught in the schools, as in the 1940–1941 *Directory—Allen County (IN) Schools*, in which the nurses with the county and Red Cross Nursing Services are also listed.

School boards, city and township trustees, and school corporations may have also published annual reports. While these may rank among the driest reading a person can endure, most provide significant details about the schools in the particular community, and a number supply census-like data on teachers, children, and contractors.

### Most Likely to Succeed

Any and every educational institution should be explored for school publications to complement actual school records that may exist. To locate these published materials, it's best to employ a strategy similar to locating school records. The holdings of all the local public libraries should be checked. Some counties will even have a single combined library system that may cover a number of school districts, and hence one special collection where area yearbooks, alumni directories, and newsletters are housed.

You will also want to check the holdings of state libraries. Historically, state libraries have endeavored to have very robust collections of directories. The Library of Congress has a Web page with links to nation's state library websites <[www.loc.gov/global/library/statelib.html](http://www.loc.gov/global/library/statelib.html)> where online catalogs and finding aids can be searched and, in many instances, links can be found to the public libraries within the particular state.

A number of libraries also have access to a bibliographic database called WorldCat, a world-wide catalog available only to libraries and other institutions. Searching for school records and publications in WorldCat allows you to quickly survey the holdings of many thousands of libraries and other organizations that are members of the Online Computer Library Center. Use the name of the school or a geographic area of interest—a city or a county—followed by a subject term such as "schools," "school census," "schools—records," or "correspondence."

School records and publications can provide both interesting and valuable information found in few other records. The fact that they are so plentiful and increasingly available through both print and digital publications should entice even the most casual researcher to take a look. These records can refine your knowledge about a family in a particular area while bringing ancestors to life through their writings, grades, photos, listings in an alumni directory, and the information others recorded about them. Among large classes of record groups, school records and publications definitely get an "A+." ☐

*Curt B. Witcher, MLS, FUGA, is the Historical Genealogy Department Manager at the Allen County Public Library and a former president of both the Federation of Genealogical Societies and the National Genealogical Society.*

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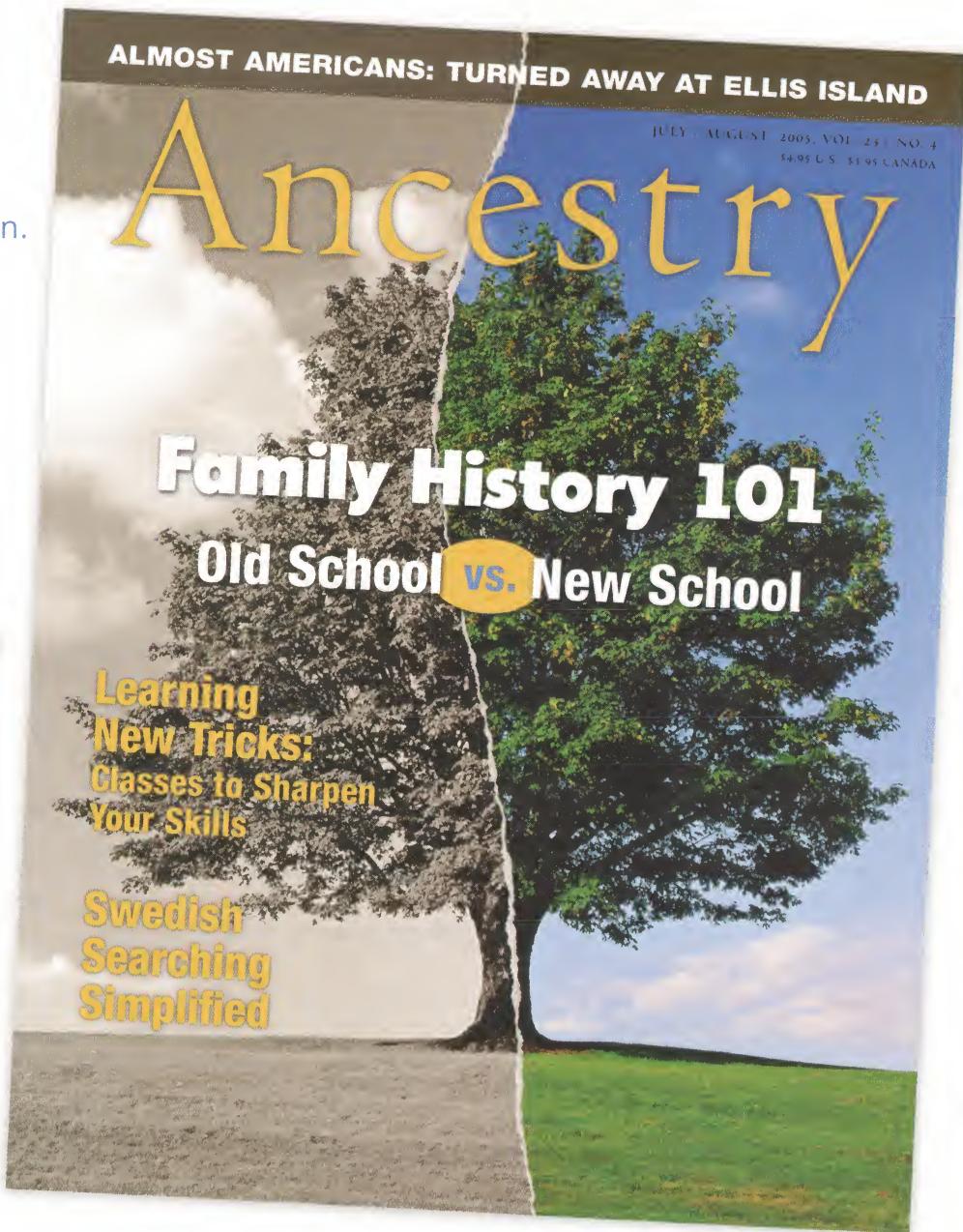
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# VOICE OVER IP



BY BEAU SHARBROUGH

In late 2000, I did some work for a computer distributor headquartered in Kansas with regional sales offices in Atlanta, L.A., Chicago, Connecticut, and Dallas. In early 2001, the distributor decided to connect its offices with a voice over Internet protocol network, or VoIP for short. It sounded cool, until you tried to watch a video conference or talk on a phone. The thing kept cutting out as the broadband connection dropped packets. Like many cool technical initiatives, it just wasn't ready for everyday use.

Recently, I tried out a VoIP provider at my home. The provider sent me a router that looked just like any other blue four-port router except that it also had a pair of phone jacks on the back. I connected it to another router I was using already, connected a plain old phone to it, and, in a couple of minutes, the phone had a dial tone.

I made a few calls to people who are used to participating in my mad experiments. "You're talking to me on a WHAT?" they'd say. At first I said something like, "A voice over IP connection. Isn't that cool?" Then I tired of that and just said, "Over the Internet. I'm not using the phone company." They said it sounded just like any other bothersome phone call. I could hear just fine from my end, too. What a difference in quality in only four years. I'm surprised that no politician has taken credit yet for the visible, um, audible improvements.

People have come to expect the unexpected, and perhaps my friends have been conditioned to it more than most. Anyhow, I not only tried out VoIP, I transferred my phone number and cut the cable, er, phone line. This was not a decision that I took lightly. I love Ma Bell. I want them to put her back together. I lived in Texas

for fifty years, and the power goes out during big thunderstorms there, but the phone almost never did. It's always been a family tradition to call the power company and tell them that the power is off because we heard the transformer blow right behind our house. So despite that tradition, here I am, without a phone line connected to my house. I reasoned that my cell phone works pretty well, if I keep it charged up. If I had a power outage and needed to call someone, I'd try that. So I switched.

## WHAT'S ALL THIS NOISE ABOUT VOIP?

Phone carriers have been using digital networks for years. Remember the commercials with Candace Bergen where you could hear a pin drop over a spiffy-cool fiber optic network? What they were doing was taking sound and converting it to an electronic signal



WHILE VOIP IS A NICE TYPOGRAPHIC ABBREVIATION, AND IT SATISFIES MY JONES FOR BREVITY, IT'S NOT REALLY AN ACRONYM. IN MY EXPERIENCE, PEOPLE PRONOUNCE IT "VOICE OVER IP" INSTEAD OF SAYING VOIP. I'M SURE THAT THE KIDS WILL SAY IT SOON ENOUGH BECAUSE IT'S ACTUALLY ONE OF THOSE FUNNY WORDS THAT THEY LIKE TO SAY OVER AND OVER.

the way Al Bell did, but then they converted the electronic signal into a digital signal and sent it through the fiber optic network in packets.

Packetizing voice traffic turned out to be a good deal for phone companies—they didn't have to connect a pair of copper wires from your phone to your mother's and leave it for the two of you to monopolize until your ear got numb and you made an excuse to get off the phone. Instead, they could put thousands of conversations together for the long haul and then split them apart at the other end. Long distance prices plummeted from a dollar to a dime by 1999 and are essentially gone now.

Many cell phones have free long distance. A number of traditional phone providers also offer flat fee, unlimited long distance to residential

users. And now most VoIP service providers, including Vonage, Lingo, and AT&T CallVantage, offer free long distance to the United States and Canada. Some packages even include free long distance to parts of Europe and Asia.

What a "Future Shock" that is. I'm old enough to remember when "don't bother him, he's on long distance" meant that somebody was spending a lot of money on something that deserved his undivided attention. Try saying that now, and my daughters—the Sharbrough sisters—will roll their eyes the way I taught them to and tell you to get a grip.

#### WHAT'S THE DEAL?

Genealogists find, organize, and share information about families. The

right VoIP deal could help you *find* through broadband Internet access. It could also help you *share* through inexpensive long distance telephone service.

To use VoIP, you need broadband service (DSL or cable), which is not included. Vonage, for example, charges \$15 a month for 500 minutes outbound and unlimited inbound. For \$25, you can have unlimited calling either way. My old phone bill for a single line and plain old service was usually \$55. With the annual savings, I could buy a big old Christmas present or, if I'm careful, buy a ticket for the Sharbrough sisters to visit me. So let's think . . . give the money to the phone company, or give it to a VoIP provider, get the same service, and have the Sharbrough sisters visit?

Did I say "get the same service"? I shouldn't have. Most VoIP providers have cool e-mail and web integration. For example, I get an e-mail telling me that I have a voice mail at home. I can use a browser to view my phone traffic from anywhere—to see who called me and who I called. I can play my phone messages on my laptop. I didn't get that from my old phone. It's quite convenient, but I might be a special case. I don't get many phone calls that aren't from family or sales people, and neither group leaves many messages.

If you don't have broadband coming into your home, you might want to think about getting it. If you are using two phone lines—one for Internet/fax and one for voice—you're paying your dial-up provider and the phone company about the same that you'd pay for DSL and VoIP. And once you leave dialup, you never go back.

#### THERE'S GOTTA' BE A CATCH

There are some down sides to VoIP. First of all, some VoIP providers have problems with faxes, alarm systems, TiVo, and 911 calls (mine does not). If you have any of these things and rely on them, you'll want to be sure that you get the same capabilities from VoIP or stick with status quo.

VoIP ends when the power goes off unless you use a battery backup. If you connect your router and phone to the backup (and who knows, maybe even a computer), you can still send and receive calls until either the power returns or your backup dies, whichever comes first. In any event, I personally plan to use my cell phone by candlelight when the power goes out here.

Also, since calls go out like packets, the same as your e-mail and web browsing, it has some security exposures. If you're using the phone for something that you're not saying in e-mail and chat, you might suggest that your bookie, er, colleague, consider a VPN (virtual private network) connection to encrypt your conversations.

Industry pundits estimate that VoIP numbers will grow from 16 million users spending \$1 billion in 2004, to 197 million users spending \$15 billion by 2008—they're planning on a big bandwagon. Look, a big crowd can be wrong, but they still get the best customer service.

#### TALK IS PERFECTLY CHEAP

Whenever I buy something, I want it to be perfect, free, now. I don't actually

get it, but a person needs goals.

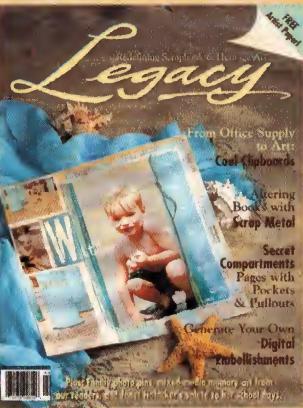
In the 1980s, genealogists used that expensive pre-Murphy Brown long distance to talk to relatives and colleagues, and spent sparingly on copies, envelopes, and postage to send pictures, group sheets, and transcriptions to each other. It's nice to get mail, but I don't miss it.

Today, it's possible to use the Internet to stay in closer contact with more people for less money and to exchange those documents instantly in an electronic form. That's better, cheaper, faster, and a step closer to the perfect, free, now world that I want to live in. ☼

*Beau Sharbrough is an employee of MyFamily.com, Inc. He lives in Provo, Utah, and writes the RootsWorks articles for the Ancestry Daily News.*

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# Case Study

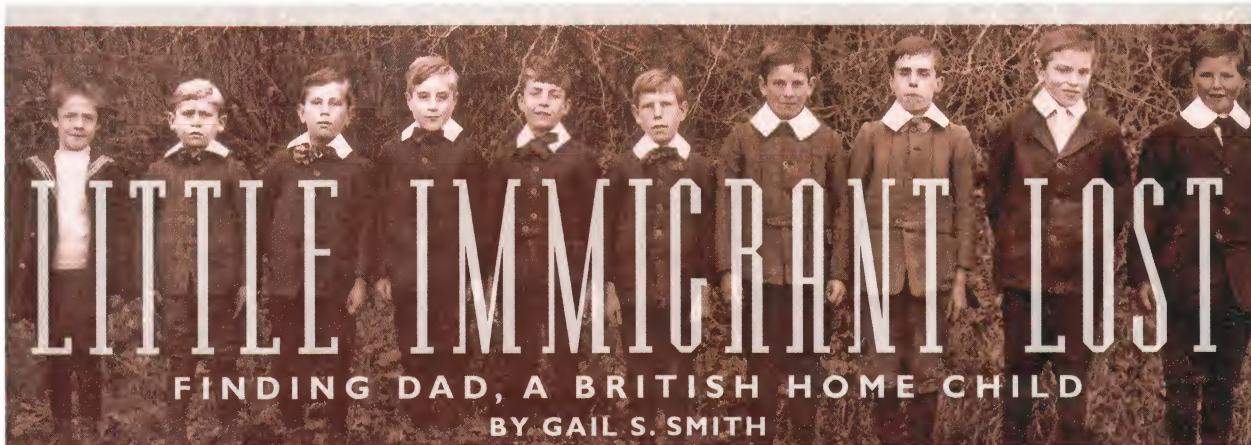


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Boys residing at the Ellinor Home Farm in November 1910. Thomas Gordon Brocklebank is the sixth boy from the left.

**S**heptember under the carpet for many years, a British child emigration scheme was in operation between 1869 and 1939. More than 100,000 children, most between seven and fourteen years of age, but some as young as four, were sent to Canada from the British Isles by at least fifty childcare organizations.

This scheme was brought about by a number of social and economic factors, both in Great Britain and in Canada. In Great Britain, it helped to relieve the problems of large numbers of orphan and pauper children in the city streets, and overcrowded workhouses and orphanages. In Canada, the children helped meet the demand for cheap labor, both agricultural and domestic.

It may have originally been hoped that the children would be taken into a receiving family's home and raised as one of their own, but these children were there to work—girls as domestics and boys as farm laborers—essentially as indentured servants until age eighteen and often subject to abuse. Agencies went to great lengths to sever family connections back in England and to erase the identities of these children. Occasionally a child would get lucky and be adopted into a new family in Canada, although most were not.

Regardless of whether their experiences were good or bad, these children share one common trait: as adults, they rarely talked about their

past, not even to their families. Their pasts were considered something to be ashamed of, and each of these children was subject to discrimination and scorn. The families in England who sent these children off to this "better life" in Canada—most of whom never again had contact with their children—didn't talk about the experience either.

Today these children are known as the British Home Children, or the Little Immigrants. And I discovered, quite accidentally, that my father, Thomas Gordon Brocklebank, and his brother, Harold, were among them.

\* \* \*

When I started my search, not only did I not know my father was a British Home Child, I didn't even know what a British Home Child was, nor did I have much of an interest in genealogy.

One day, however, after an unusual finding on an Internet search of my maiden name, I started looking for family information. My initial goal was to find out why and how Dad left England to live in Canada and then the United States. I had little to go on, just bits and pieces of family lore. Dad had died several years before; Mother had died a year later. My sister and two brothers didn't know any more than I did, maybe even less.

I knew Dad had immigrated to Canada when he was young, had

worked on farms there, and had been in an orphanage. He had two brothers and two sisters. I knew his brother, Harold, had also come to Canada and the United States and ultimately lived down the street from my family prior to my birth, but that was all I knew.

While surfing the Internet, I tried looking up immigration to Canada and found a promising looking website called *Young Immigrants to Canada* <<http://www.ist.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/homeadd.html>>. Here I was introduced to British Home Children, and as I read about them, it all seemed to fall into place. I found the link to a database of children's names on the Canadian Genealogy Centre website <[www.genealogy.gc.ca](http://www.genealogy.gc.ca)>. The database is an ongoing indexing project of the British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa (BIFHSGO), in which names of Home Children are extracted from passenger lists held by Library and Archives Canada.

Doing a search, I typed in my father's name but had no hits. Trying a more general search, I put in just the surname which resulted in two hits: Harold Brocklebank and Jane Brocklebank. Clicking on the icon by Harold's name produced a page with data for Harold containing basic, but important, information: he arrived March 1914 on the *S.S. Canada*, destination Hamilton, Ontario.

I didn't know for sure that this was Dad's brother, but still I was ecstatic.

The "party," or sending organization, unfortunately, was not given, but the destination of Hamilton, Ontario, was an important clue. I learned through research that the children went to different distributing homes in different towns, depending on the sending organization.

By determining which organization had a distributing home in Hamilton, Ontario, and the present address of the home in England, I was able to obtain copies of Harold's orphanage records. These records confirmed that Harold was in fact my uncle and also eliminated the possibility of Jane—the other Brocklebank on the list—being another sibling.

But where was Dad? All evidence pointed to him being a British Home Child, but I had yet to prove it.

Harold's records held a clue. Though Dad had not been placed in the same home as his brother, Harold's records placed Dad at "Home Farm Rimouski, Quebec," in December 1910. I also learned that a sister of Dad and Harold, Gertrude, had been sent to an orphanage, although not an orphanage that sent children to Canada. Through more online research, including subscribing to a RootsWeb mailing list, I was able to obtain the name and address of Gertrude's orphanage and ultimately her records. From her admission record in 1908, Dad appeared to still be with his family in England. So I had a three-year time period for Dad's probable year of immigration—1908 through 1910.

All this was found pretty quickly, but finding Dad was a different story. I didn't know if "Home Farm" referred to a distributing home or just a private home on a farm. Since there was no distributing home in Rimouski, the consensus from a number of sources was that "Home Farm, Rimouski" was just a family farm.

I started out writing to orphanages in England, but it soon became obvious that, with overseas postage, return postage, and donations to the homes for their efforts, it could be an expensive and futile option. I instead turned to passenger lists on microfilm. I searched only within the three-year time period, but, without a doubt, four ports of arrival multiplied by three years equaled a *lot* of ships, a *lot* of passenger lists, and a *lot* of microfilm reels.

Three years and twenty-four reels of microfilm later, I got the break I needed from a friend, a knowledgeable genealogist who suggested trying St. Albans Immigration records, a set of records created in 1894 in an effort by the United States government to document immigrants entering across the Canadian border.

Searching the appropriate microfilm, I found Dad's entry into the

sailing of the *Empress of Britain* in August 1908. I went back and scrutinized that record. Was it really 1908? Comparing it with other numbers on the same record, I concluded that it was. Assuming the record to be at least partially correct, I searched the rest of the 1908 reel for other sailings of the *Empress of Britain*, as well as those of the *Empress of Ireland*, all with no luck.

Then I tried August 1909 and found a sailing of the *Empress of Britain*. It was on this list that I found Dad, all by himself, listed as Tom Brocklebank, not Gordon. His destination was Nauwigewauk, New Brunswick. Unfortunately, there was no sending organization named, nor any indication that he was a Home Child.

I looked through the rest of the ship's passenger list to see if anyone else was going to Nauwigewauk. I

## FINDING A BRITISH HOME CHILD

**How do you know if a family member was a British Home Child? It's hard to say for certain, but you can use the following guidelines to determine if a family member might have been a British Home Child, and then conduct your own search to learn more:**

- Came from England alone, without family or siblings
- Came from England at a young age
- Worked on farms in Canada, especially while young
- Was British born and came to America from Canada
- Was separated from siblings or has lost track of them
- Has family, especially siblings, still in England
- Has a history, actual or rumored, of being an orphan or being in an orphanage
- Has age and birth date discrepancies compared to a birth certificate

United States from Canada without any difficulty. The record provided quite a lot of information on just one little index card. Most importantly, it indicated that he landed in Quebec in August 1908 on the *Empress of Britain*—exactly what I was looking for. However, searching another reel of passenger lists (one I had already searched), I found that he *wasn't* there. In fact, there wasn't even a

found only two others—a woman in steerage with Dad, and a woman in first class named Ellinor Close.

At that point, I went back to do some playing around with the Home Children database. I wanted to know what organizations sent children to New Brunswick. Searching with "New Brunswick" as my key words, I had 682 hits. Before too long, I came across a child from the Ellinor Home whose

Gordon Brocklebank 1909		
Age 9 years.		
Brought by Mrs Close to the Ellinor Home Farm August 1909		
Has no parents.		
Delicate looking boy, deafness caused by adenoids.		
March 1910, had adenoids removed in St John Hospital.		
May 10, 1911, went to Mr McLam Rolling Dawn, N.B.		

Record of Thomas Gordon Brocklebank from the Ellinor Home Farm, courtesy of Kings County Historical Museum, Hampton, NB. The author notes that this record is not entirely accurate, as is often the case with British Home Child records. At the time this record was created, says the author, Thomas Gordon Brocklebank was eleven years old, and he was placed into the home by his father.

destination was New Brunswick. It had a familiar ring to it.

Going back through old correspondence, I found letters from when I was inquiring about Home Farm, Rimouski. In one of the replies, there was mention of an Ellinor Home Farm in Nauwigewauk, but the person who wrote the reply concluded it probably wasn't what I was looking for because it was a long way from Rimouski and there were no existing records of the home. It was run by a Mrs. Ellinor Close, the same person on the *Empress of Britain*. This was the home I was looking for.

Things started moving quickly. John Sayers of Home Children Canada

and the British Home Children Database had come across an article about the Ellinor Home that named twenty-six children, including a Gordon Brocklebank, but he didn't know its source. Three days and a lot of Internet searching and e-mailing later, the article source was identified, and some records of the home were located in the Kings County Historical Museum in Hampton, New Brunswick.

On a tip from someone on the British Home Children mailing list, I learned that copies of vintage glass plate negatives of New Brunswick-area photographs were available for purchase from a photographer in New Brunswick. In the collection were pictures of the Ellinor Home Farm, one of which included my dad.

One lesson in particular stands out for me in the story of the British Home Children: the strength of family ties, what genealogy is all about. These children went to great lengths in attempts to be reunited with their families in England, to locate their siblings who were also sent to Canada, and to learn more about their own

identities. Some children searched all their lives and never learned who their family was. For many of these children, the search continues with their descendants.

My dad, for example, and my Uncle Harold somehow reconnected in Detroit fourteen years after their separation. Both made their permanent homes there and became U.S. citizens. Among the letters in Harold's orphanage records was a letter from their oldest sister, Annie, in England, saying she was out of work and needed money for her wedding but couldn't find their father. Harold arranged to have \$25 sent to her from his account.

While they corresponded as adults, Dad and Annie were never reunited. Among family pictures, however, I found a picture of Annie. It is signed on the back, just a simple note, but it speaks volumes. "To Tom, from your loving sister Anne." ♡

*Born and raised in Detroit, Gail Smith is a long-time resident of Lake Linden in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Gail, a microbiologist, is a member of the Houghton-Keweenaw County Genealogical Society, and has been researching her family history for almost six years. She recently took first place in the Original Research Story category at the 2005 International Society of Family History Writers and Editors (ISFHWE) writing competition for this essay. Gail can be reached at gsmith@up.net.*

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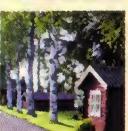
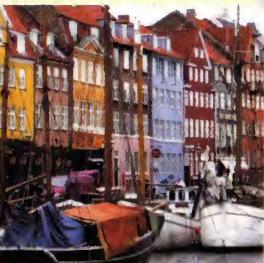
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## My Grandmother's Passport *by Debra Braverman*

My grandmother lived in the same apartment building in Brooklyn for over fifty years. She had moved there just before the *bar mitzvah* of my father, her eldest child, and remained there until her death, raising three children in, and burying my grandfather from, the same two-bedroom apartment.

When I was growing up, my feelings about my grandmother were the same, I imagine, as many other children. We were always going to visit when there was something else I wanted to do, and when we arrived, I was never allowed to do anything fun like play the piano, which was in the living room. Instead, I spent a lot of time running up and down the stairs between Grandma's apartment and her sister's apartment two floors below.

As I became an adult, however, Grandma and I became close, and I would call weekly and visit whenever possible. I had always been interested in our family history; I was the kid who knew my grandmothers' maiden names and where they had lived before they came to the United States. When I began doing genealogy in 1987, I started asking Grandma questions about her life in Poland. She always answered in the same annoyed way: "Why are you bothering me with these questions? If we hadn't left they would have killed us." Now, given that she and her family left Warsaw in the early 1920s, this wasn't strictly true at the time, but since she lost many relatives in the Holocaust, it was certainly true in hindsight.

One time I persuaded Grandma to show me her naturalization certificate. When I asked if I could borrow it to

make a copy, she refused, as if letting it out of her possession would cause something terrible to happen. She wouldn't even let me borrow my grandfather's naturalization certificate, and he had been dead over fifteen years. When I would ask her about other papers or documents, either from Poland or her new life after arrival here, she denied having anything else.

After her death, it was left to my aunt, my cousin, and me to clean out Grandma's apartment. You'd think

lined with paper so many years before, that I found it. It started as a bump under the lining. When I lifted the paper, it was there—a little book with Polish writing. After about ten seconds I realized it was her Polish passport.

I must have screamed because my aunt and cousin came running in and had to calm me down since I was hyperventilating. I sat there, looking at this little book that had allowed Grandma to leave Poland and come here in 1923. The passport had several pictures of her as a teenager, as well as her signature of her Polish name, something that had been left behind forever along with the people and life she had known.

It is said that people don't really die as long as someone remembers them. So when I became pregnant four years after my grandmother's death, I promised Grandma's sisters that I would follow the Ashkenazic Jewish tradition—if my baby were a girl, I would name her for Grandma, both honoring Grandma and keeping her memory alive.

My now six-year old daughter knows that her special Hebrew name is the same as her Poppy's mother, my grandmother, whose picture hangs on our wall. I don't know for certain for whom Grandma was named, but I know that in continuing the tradition, the memory of my grandmother is assured. ☙

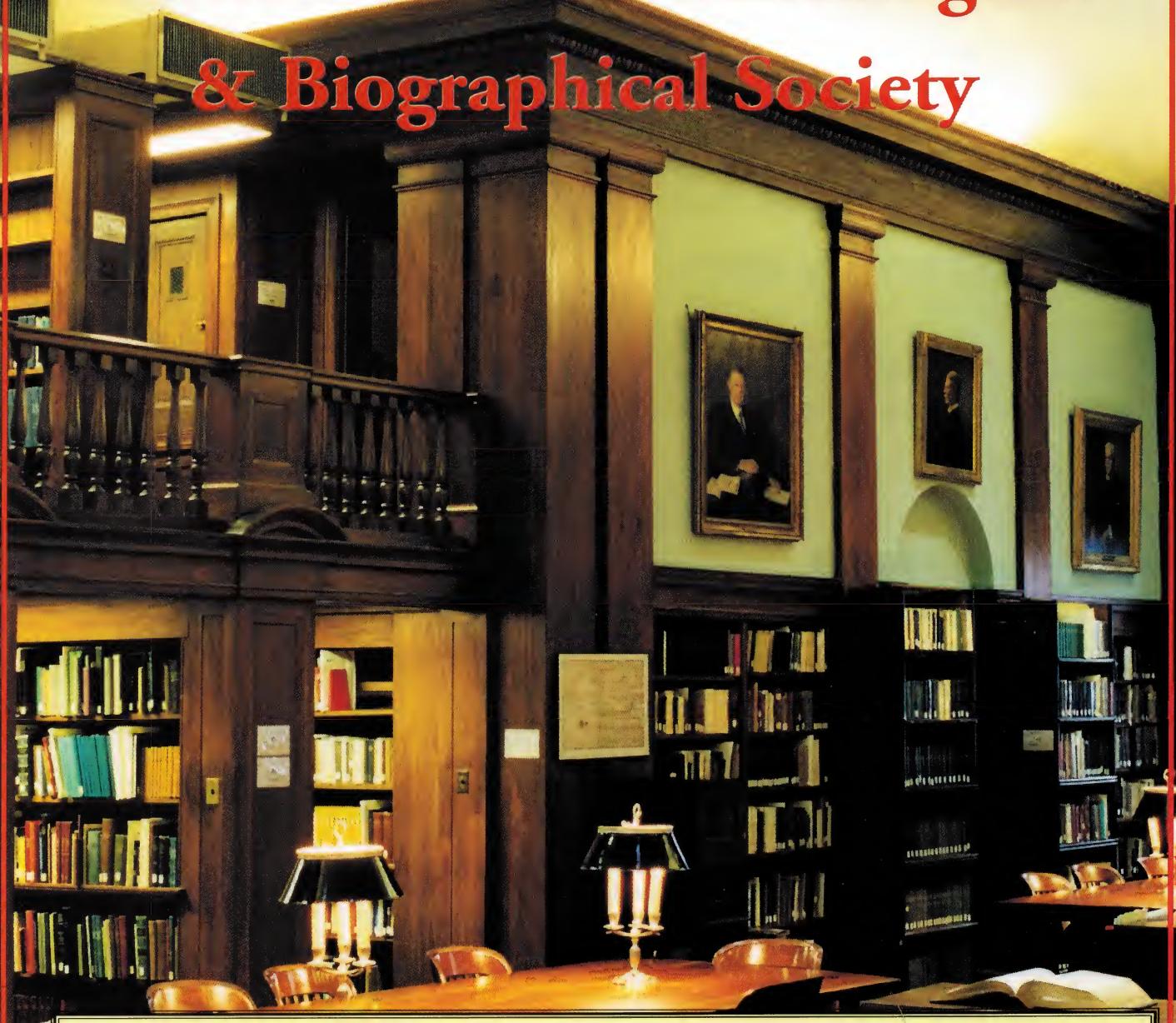
that a person living in the same place for fifty years would have accumulated a tremendous number of things, but my grandmother had saved only certain items of value to her: beautiful dresses from the 1940s along with matching purses and gloves, a Persian lamb coat with her name embroidered inside, and, for some reason (maybe because he had been a butcher), my grandfather's big cleaver.

It was when I was cleaning out a dresser drawer that had been carefully



*Debra Braverman is a New York-based genealogist and an award-winning writer, most recently winning a 2005 ISFHWE award for this essay, My Grandmother's Passport.*

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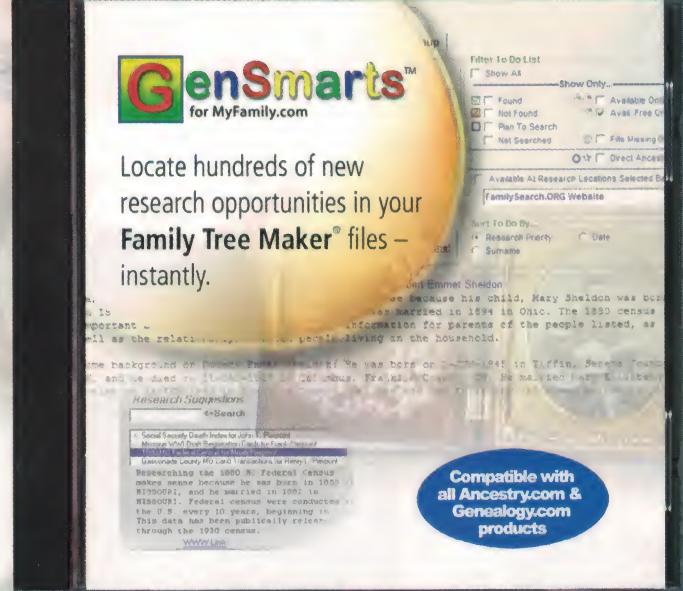


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Background on John Emmet Sheldon: He was born on 1854-07-15 in Tiffin, Seneca County, Ohio, and he died on 1927-01-15 in Tiffin, Seneca County, Ohio. He was married in 1884 in Ohio. The 1890 census information for parents of the people listed, as well as the relationship of the people living in the household.

Research Suggestions

Social Security Death Index for John E. Sheldon  
Missouri Death Registration (Death by Cause - Preliminary)

Univacdata Library MO Land Tax Records in Henry, Missouri

Researching the 1880 & 1900 U.S. Federal Census records for John Timms (1854-1927) in Missouri, he was born in 1854 in Missouri, and he married in 1882 in Missouri. Federal census were conducted in 1880, 1890, 1900, and 1910. Missouri was not included in the 1880 census. This data has been publicly released through the 1930 census.

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